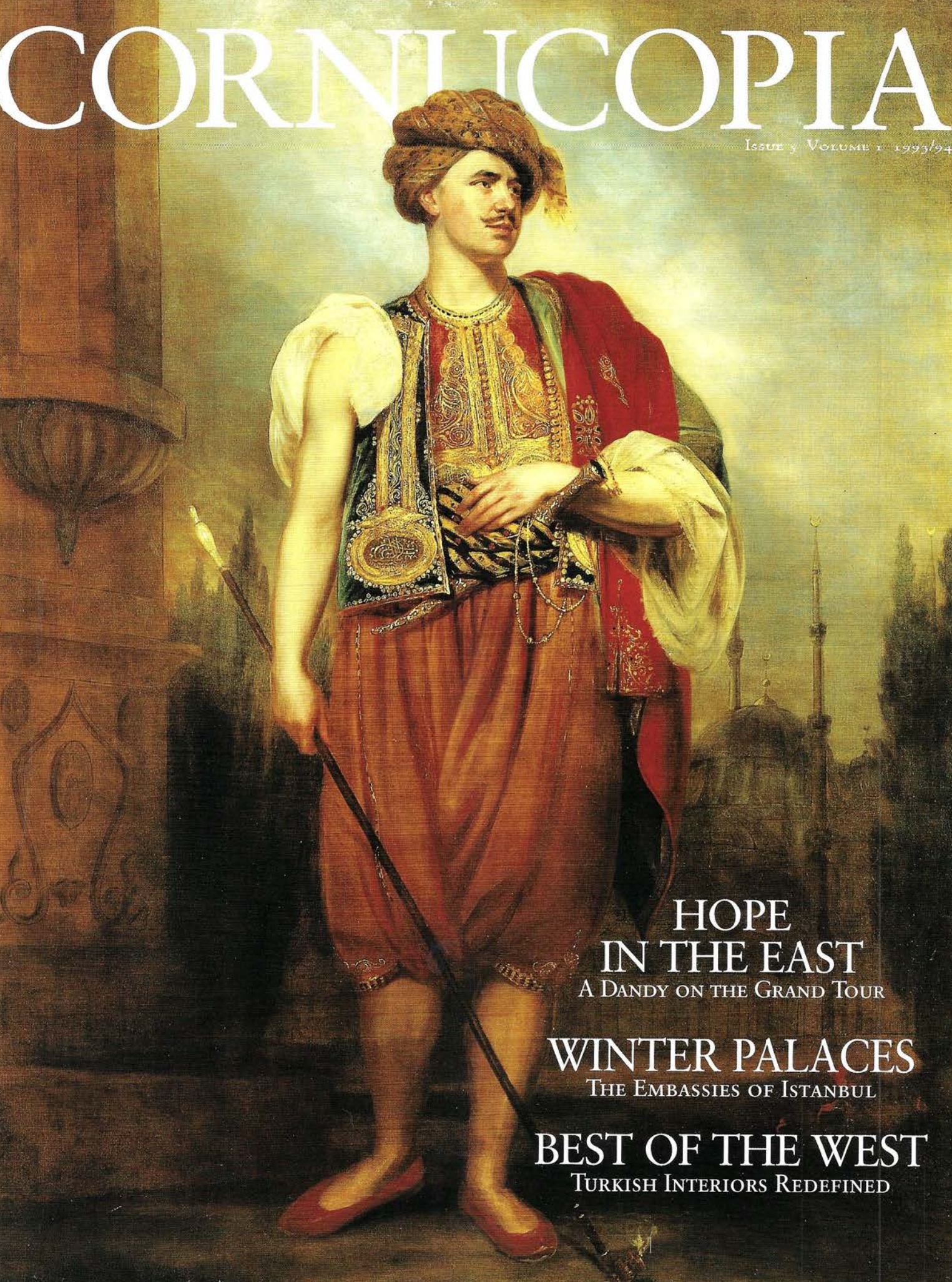


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Issue 3 VOLUME 1 1993/94

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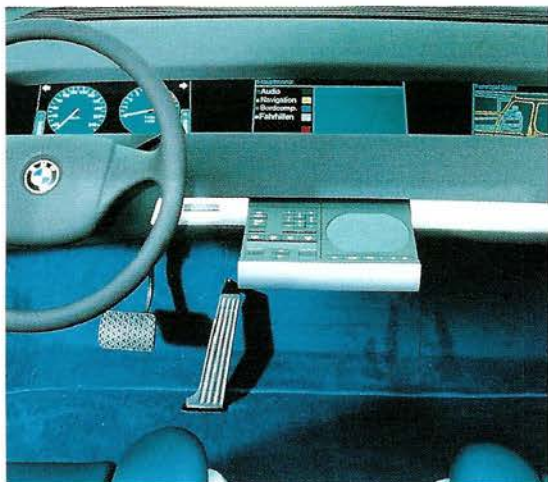
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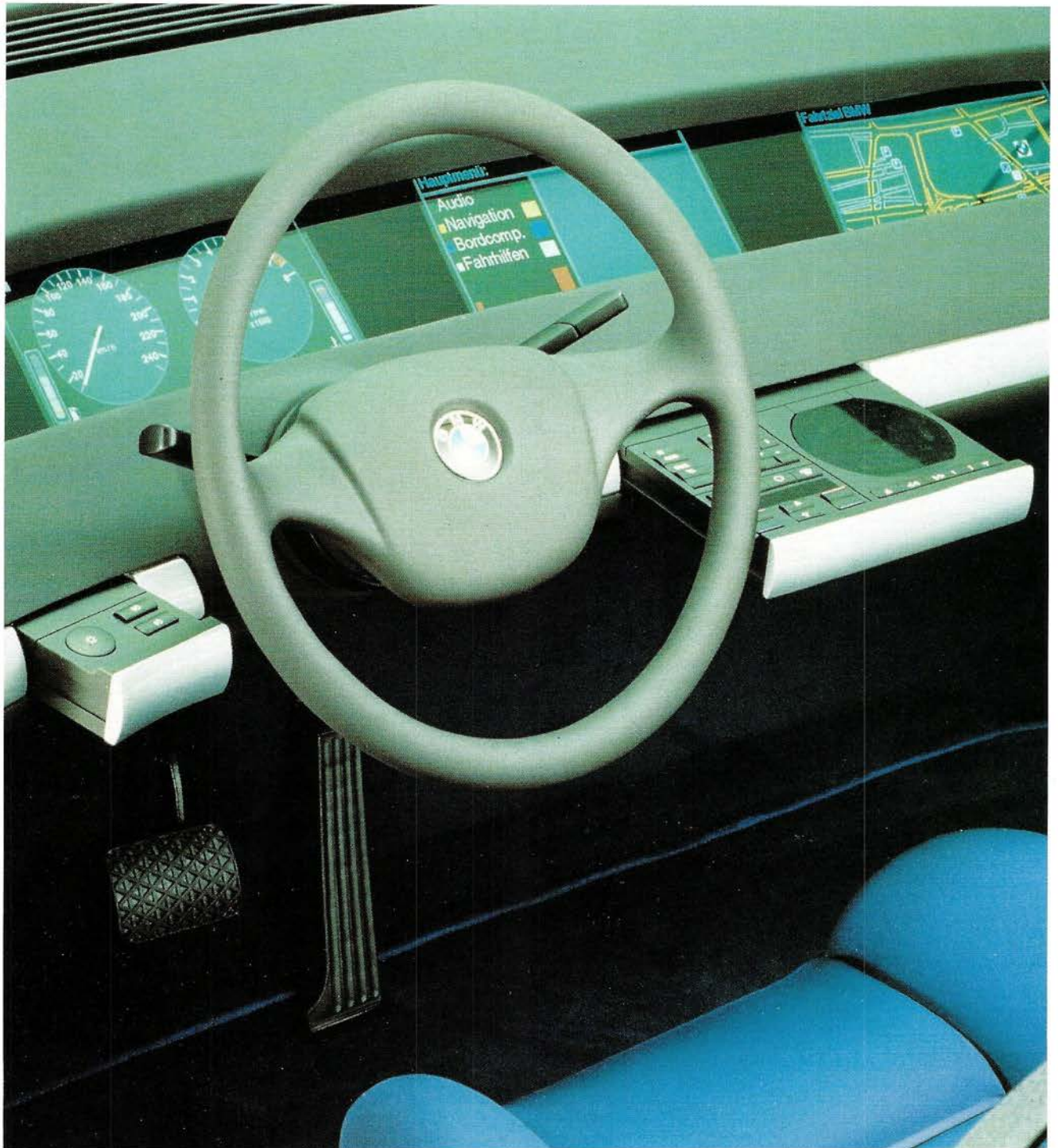
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TURKEY

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THE ORIGINAL CORNUCOPIA

Derived from the Latin *cornu copiae* or 'horn of plenty', a horn overflowing with flowers, fruit and corn; symbol of prosperity and abundance in the cities of Anatolia.

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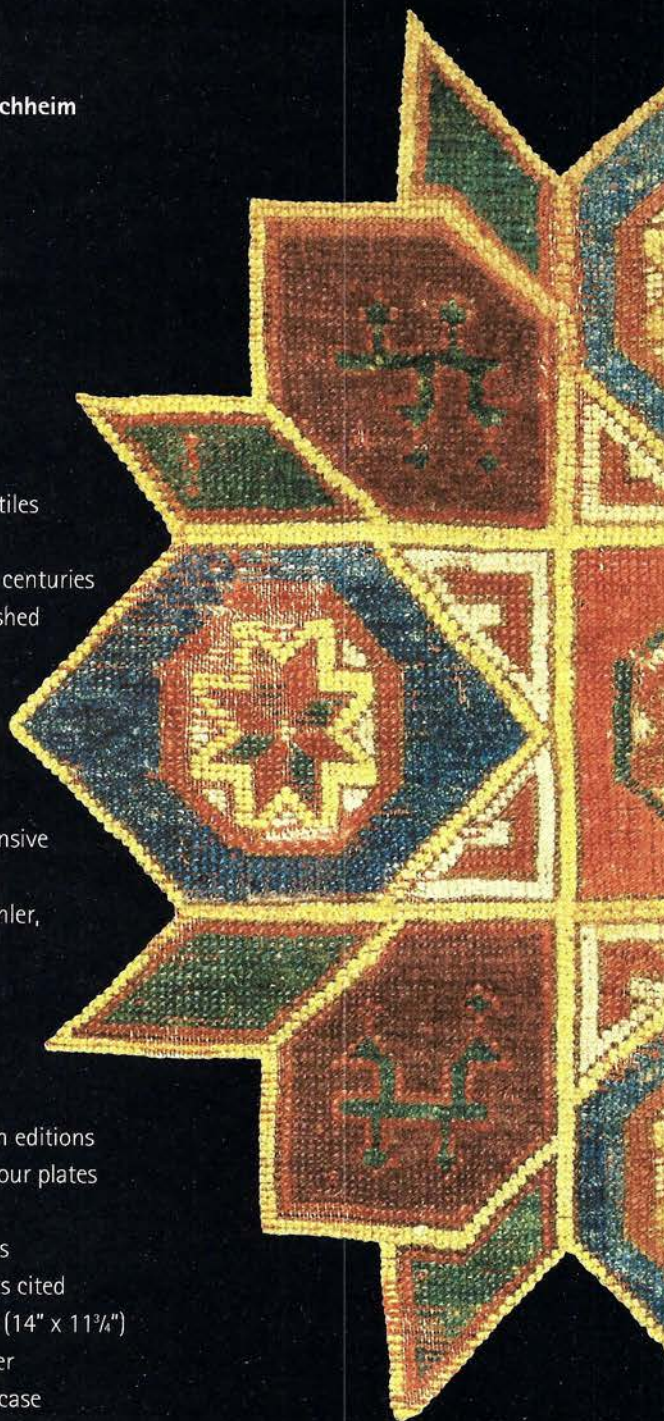
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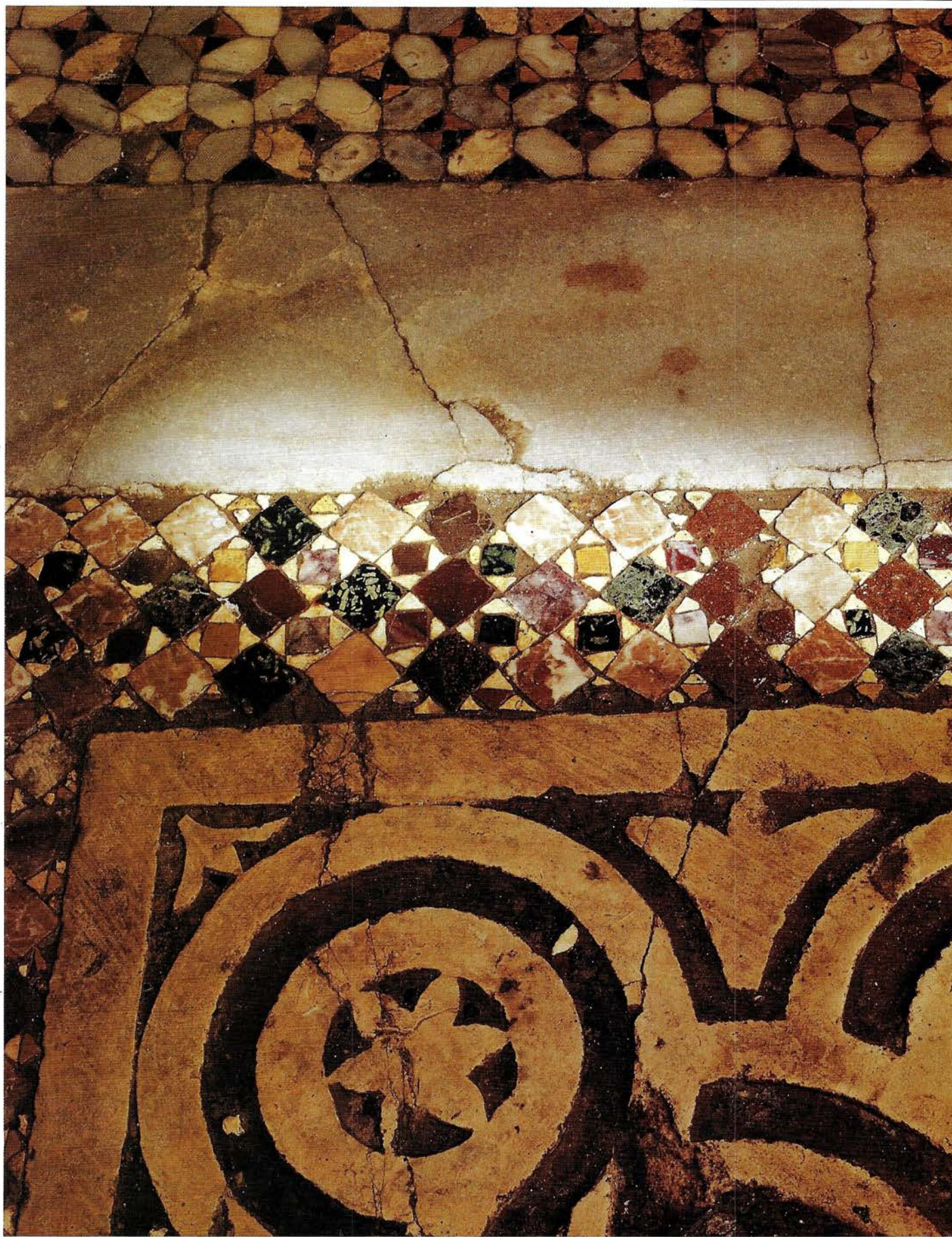
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CONNOISSEUR

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Ancestors of the iron lady

NINE THOUSAND YEARS
OF THE ANATOLIAN
WOMAN, TOPKAPI PALACE
MUSEUM.

PIONEERING SPIRITS:

EMANCIPATION OF
THE TURKISH WOMAN,
ALAY KÖŞKÜ.

CONTEMPORARY WOMEN
ARTISTS, ARCHAEOLOGICAL
MUSEUM.

ALL THREE EXHIBITIONS
ARE IN THE GROUNDS OF
THE TOPKAPI PALACE.

One of the rubrics of a major exhibition series being held in Istanbul this winter is "Women in Power". It is just coincidence, it seems, that the opening ribbon is to be cut by Mrs Tansu Çiller, Turkey's prime minister as well as the prime candidate for the role of most powerful woman in the 9,000 years the exhibition sets out to commemorate.

The exhibition, held at the Has Ahırlar (imperial stables) of Topkapı Palace – and billed by its organisers as a rival to the Anatolian Civilisations exhibition held under the aegis of the Council of Europe a decade ago to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the Turkish republic – sets out to illustrate other aspects of women through the millennia, from the sacred to the domestic. It traces the rise of the mother goddess at the end of the Neolithic period and the apparent equality of gods and goddesses in the pantheons of Bronze Age Anatolia. It then sees the emergence of the mother goddess in the form of Kybele, who in turn spawned a host of Greek and Roman goddesses, including Artemis, Aphrodite,



and, with the rise of Christianity, even Byzantine icons of the Virgin Mary. The central role of women in the arts of the Islamic period is illustrated by endowment deeds, miniatures, and costumes and jewellery worn from the thirteenth to the twentieth century.

The exhibition is dauntingly large. What is more, of the 530 major objects on display, drawn from museums and collections throughout the country, nearly half have never been exhibited before – more than enough reason to visit Istanbul this winter.

Two parallel exhibitions are being mounted in the grounds of Topkapı Palace. *Contemporary Women Artists*, in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum, covers the entire spectrum of the visual arts from the establishment of



CONTRASTING VIEWS OF WOMEN AT THE RECENTLY OPENED TOPKAPI EXHIBITION.

ABOVE: THE ELUSIVE LOOK.

THE APPARENT MEEKNESS OF OTTOMAN WOMEN BELIES THEIR HISTORICAL INFLUENCE ON ART.

LEFT: BRONZE AGE FEMINISM

Istanbul's School of Fine Arts for Women in 1914 to the new generation of artists born in the 1960s.

Pioneering Spirits: Emancipation of Turkish Women, at the Alay Pavilion, celebrates women's emergence in public life from the late Ottoman period to the present day with a series of "firsts": the first woman teacher, judge, ambassadress, opera singer, athlete and so on. There, Mrs Çiller wins her place by right. ♦

Art from a distance

BY JEAN MICHEL CASA

THE GUARDIS' TURKISH
PAINTINGS: A RECENT
EXHIBITION AT
THE FONDAZIONE
GIORGIO CINI, VENICE

In 1699, when the Marquis Charles de Ferriol d'Argental was appointed French ambassador to the Ottoman court by Louis XIV, he took in his entourage a little-known artist from Valenciennes to paint the costumes and customs of the Ottoman capital and to record his mission. The marquis returned to France in 1711, but Jean-Baptiste Van Mour stayed on in Istanbul, assuming the honorary title of *peintre ordinaire du Roi en Levant* and serving each of de Ferriol's successors at the Palais de France until his death in 1737. He also worked as a portraitist, illustrator of diplomatic and Ottoman court ceremony and painter of orientalist scenes for other diplomats in Istanbul, among them Sir Edward Wortley Montagu (husband of the famous British diarist Lady Mary Wortley Montagu), the Venetian *bailos* and the Dutch ambassador Cornelis Calkoen, who collected the sixty Van Mour oil paintings now in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam.

Van Mour was never a great master, but he was, in effect, the first of the orientalist painters: he acquired a talent for portraits and was inspired by the tradition of Turkish miniature painting. For his contemporary, the engraver, collector and critic Pierre-Jean Baptiste Mariette, his works were "more interesting for what they represent than for the manner in which they are painted..."

Charles de Ferriol, for his part, was whimsical and quick-tempered. In spite of the policy of rapprochement with Turkey desired by Louis XIV, the ambassador was not received

by the Ottoman court owing to his insistence on wearing a sword during his audience with the Sultan. On his return to Paris he scandalised society by flaunting a young and beautiful Circassian slave, Melle Aissé, whom he had bought during his mission.

But in 1712, soon after his return to Paris, Charles de Ferriol did have the genius to publish engravings of a hundred Ottoman portraits which he had ordered from Van Mour in Turkey in 1707 and 1708. The work was an overwhelming success. Through it the Parisian public, and soon the whole of Europe, discovered the wealth and variety of the Ottoman Empire. The album was republished in quick succession in 1714 and 1715 and before long it was being plagiarised all over Europe. Counterfeits appeared in Nuremberg in 1717, Amsterdam in 1723, Paris in 1746, London in 1769 and in Venice in 1783, where the engraver Teodoro Viero drew liberally from de Ferriol's Van Mour album to supplement his *Costumes of the World*.

But well before the work of Viero, and some years after the death of Van Mour, the work of the Valenciennes artist was to enjoy a new lease of life in the city of the dogs. It is this extraordinary story that was the subject of an exhibition at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini from August to November 1993. At its heart is a figure worthy of the century of enlightenment, Marshal Count Johann-Mathias von der Schulenburg. After serving first Savoy and then Poland, and fighting with the imperial armies against the forces of Charles XII of Sweden and against those of the Sun King Louis XIV, this Saxon condottiere entered the service of the Republic of Venice, victoriously defending the island of Corfu against the Ottoman

armies in 1716. Retiring in his adopted city, where he died in 1747, he left a remarkable collection of art, of which the exhibition in the Fondazione Giorgio is eloquent testimony.

In 1741 or 1742, no doubt feeling nostalgic about the Turks against whom he had fought in the armies of the Serene Republic, the marshal sent orders to the studio of the Guardi brothers, the most celebrated painters in the city, for fourteen oriental scenes. But since Antonio and Francesco Guardi were both busy fulfilling commissions and had no intention of visiting Istanbul, they had to draw their inspiration from the material at hand. It is here that we rediscover Jean-Baptiste Van Mour.

How had works of the Valenciennes artist come to be in Venice, and who made them available to the Guardi brothers? Little is known; only that the Guardis found direct inspiration in the works of Van Mour – even the size of each work (approximately 45 x 63cm) is similar – and this is well illustrated in a subtle play of mirror images in the exhibition.

But to imitate is not to copy, and the exhibition is at times cruel to Van Mour. Where the artist of Valenciennes painted, the Guardi brothers evoked; what Van Mour recorded, the Venetians dramatised. The Guardi paintings seem, more than the originals, to have been drawn from life and are magnificent examples of the Guardis' mastery of colour and form.

The talent of the Venetians is all the more remarkable considering that the number of Van Mours available was limited, and they had to resort partly to their imagination. However, the Guardis also had recourse to Van Mour through the Ferriol prints, which were in Schulenburg's possession.

The artists juxtaposed figures from two, three or even

THE EARLIER WORK OF JEAN-BAPTISTE VAN MOUR ENABLED THE GUARDIS TO REMAIN IN THEIR VENETIAN STUDIO TO PRODUCE THEIR ORIENTAL SCENES OF THE MID-1700S. ABOVE: VAN MOUR'S 'ARMENIAN INTERIOR WITH ORIENTAL MUSICIANS AND WOMAN POURING DRINKS'. EMMANUEL BOPPE COLLECTION, GENEVA. RIGHT: THE GUARDIS' 'ARMENIAN INTERIOR' AND (FAR RIGHT) 'THE COMMANDER OF THE JANISSARIES IN FRONT OF HIS TENT' WERE BOTH COMMISSIONED BY MARSHAL COUNT JOHANN-MATHIAS VON DER SCHULENBURG





THE GUARDIS AND VAN MOUR

four different prints in one painting. The scenes thus assume a drama, like something out of the *commedia dell'arte* but in oriental costume. However, it would be wrong to see in the *turqueries* of the Guardis an exotic fantasy of colour made to order. The Schulenburg collection also reflects the real fascination on the part of the élite in the century of enlightenment for the Ottoman Empire, the splendour of its court and the diversity of its peoples. It reveals Turkey's change of role since the Crusades, in many occidental eyes, from adversary to European partner.

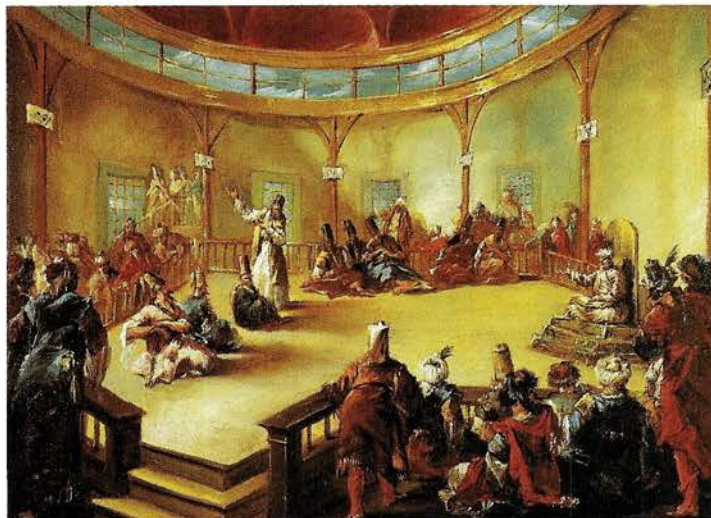
Also revealed is the contrast between Paris and Venice. Interest in the Turkish world had long existed in France, allied since François I with the Ottoman Empire (in 1721 crowds mobbed the special envoy Mehmet Efendi in Paris), but it would be necessary to wait for several years after the Treaty of Passarowitz in 1718 (which created a kind of *paix des braves* between Venice and

the Hapsburgs and the Ottoman Empire) for the old vision of Turkey to change in central Europe and the Adriatic. The Schulenburg collection represents part of the movement that gave birth to modern orientalism.

The exhibition in Venice was the fruit of research by Professor Alessandro Bettagno of Venice, assisted by Catherine Boppe-Vigne, a young French musician and art historian and granddaughter of the ambassador Augustin Boppe, who was posted several times to the Ottoman Empire. Four years ago Boppe-Vigne produced a new edition of her grandfather's book *Les Peintres du Bosphore au 18^e Siècle*. The idea for the exhibition grew largely out of her study of the close similarities between the Guardis in the Schulenburg collection and the Van Mours acquired by Boppe in Venice at the beginning of this century and those in the collection of another eminent diplomat-collector, François Charles-Roux.

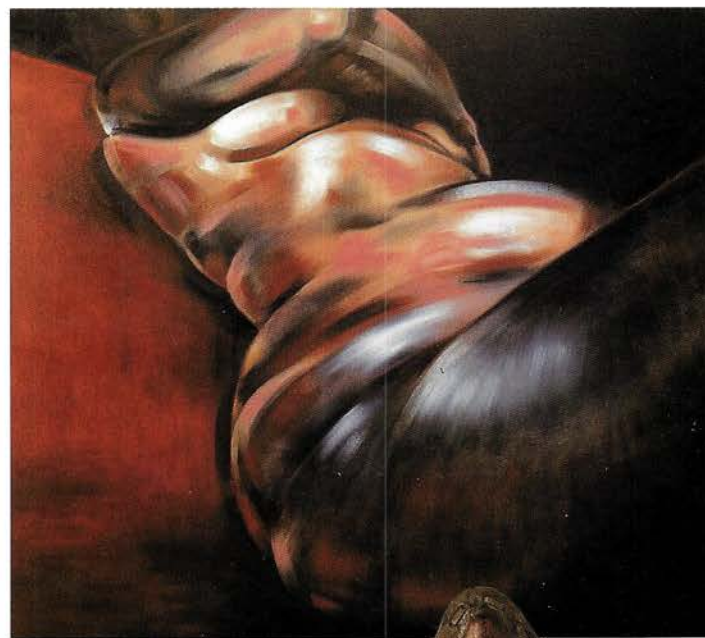
Original and fascinating, the exhibition makes an important contribution to our understanding of artistic and political relations between Western Europe and Ottoman Turkey. ♦

THE GUARDIS' INTERPRETATION OF VAN MOUR'S 'DERVISHES IN THE TEMPLE OF PERA'. PRIVATE COLLECTION, LUCERNE



CONTEMPORARY ART
SHOWS IN ISTANBUL THIS
WINTER: GALERI NEV,
MAÇKA CADDESİ 33;
AND URART, ABDİ
İPEKÇİ CADDESİ 18

season at Urart in October. In December, Fatma Tülin Öztürk, the most versatile of the young Turks, is showing at Urart with Yavuz Tanyeli. The Baconesque nude below was painted by Öztürk in 1991. For details call Urart on 212-241 2183. Other galleries to watch out for are Ramko (tel 212-236 1523) and Beral Madra's thought-provoking Galeri BM (tel 212-231 1023).



Adnan Çoker is one of Turkey's best known abstract painters: a man still concerned, at 65, with "volumes, not surfaces". He is showing at Galeri Nev till January 4. Nev continues with the Sufi-orientated Ergin İnan (January) and the sculptor Koray Arış (February), whose *Kösele/Ahşap Heykel* (sculpture in leather and wood), 1993 – is shown right. *Burnt Wood* (top), acrylic and paste on wood and copper, is by Serdar Arat, Galeri Nev's youngest artist, aged 34, who lives in New York (March 4-30). Utku Varlık exhibits in April and Selim Turan in May. Call Nev for excellent catalogues (tel 212-231 6763). Mehmet İleri's dream landscapes launched the contemporary art



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GARANTİ BANK

Autumn windfalls

ISLAMIC & TOPOGRAPHICAL
ART AT SOTHEBY'S AND
CHRISTIE'S, LONDON

The Sotheby's sale of topographical paintings that was held in October had numerous entertaining if quirky French late eighteenth-century "Turkish figures". Offered in lots of six many did not find buyers, in spite of reasonable estimates of £2,000–3,000, but one painting evidently had a very special appeal. It portrays an improbable lady dressed for the baths and holding a hammam bowl containing her bathing accoutrements; estimated at £5,000–7,000, it was sold to an Istanbul dealer for £25,000.

Few paintings of Istanbul by Edward Lear ever appear in the auction rooms, but Sotheby's had a watercolour of the city as seen from a boat in the mouth of the Bosphorus. Poor Lear,

unlucky in love, was also a little unlucky in Istanbul. When he arrived from Athens by steamer he had a raging fever, which had left him bald. His mood was grim. After a week in Istanbul he considered it "the ghastliest humbug going".

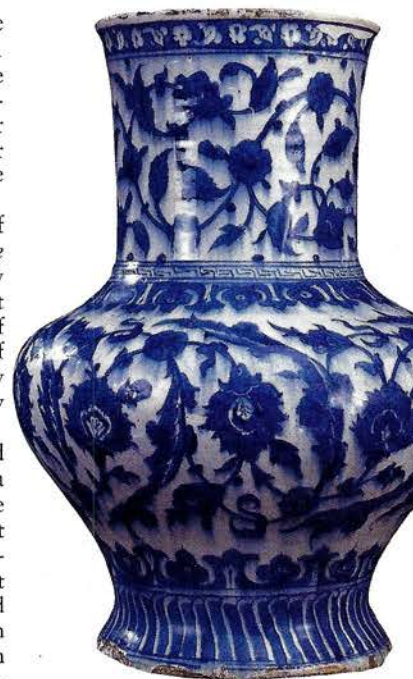
Nursed back to health by Sir Stratford and Lady Canning at the British summer embassy in Tarabya, Lear was walking again on August 28. At the beginning of September he moved from the embassy into the Hotel d'Angleterre in Pera and thereafter became increasingly enthusiastic about the city.

The Sotheby's watercolour shows the first view of Istanbul from the Sea of Marmara. The Mosque of Sultan Ahmet (the Blue Mosque) is on the left and the domed basilica of Ayasofya (at that time a mosque) is on the right. Üsküdar (Scutari), on the Asian shore of the Bosphorus,

can be seen in the distance. The painting, in the November 11 sale of watercolours from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, belonged to Chichester Fortescue, a close friend of Lear whom he met in Rome in the 1840s. It sold for £25,000.

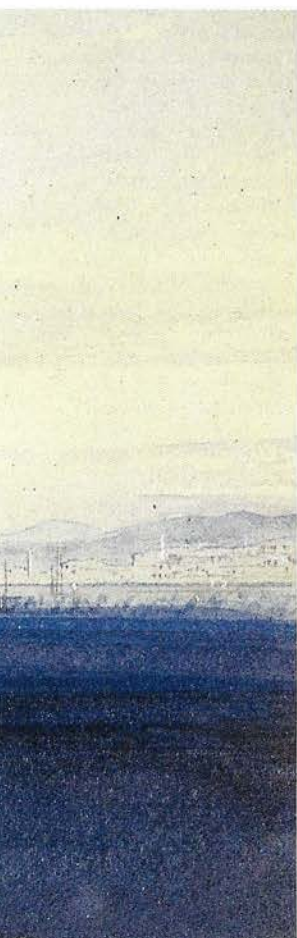
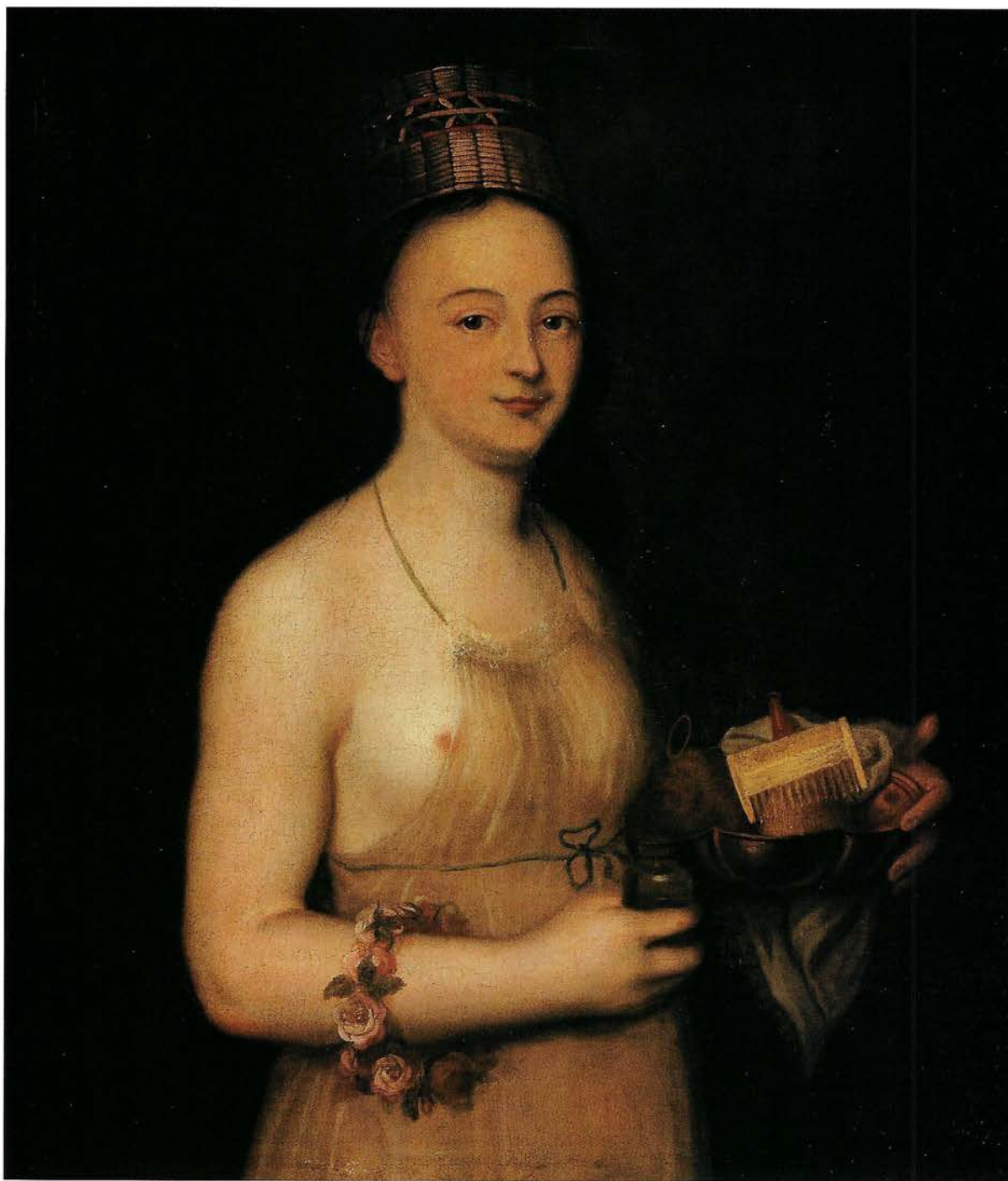
Another attractive view of Istanbul was *Boatmen on the Shores of the Bosphorus* by Fabius Brest (1823–1900). It probably depicts the shore of Tophane, with the mosque of Kılıç Ali Pasha concealed by sails and plane trees. This lively oil painting sold for £10,000.

The Sotheby's Islamic and Indian art sale in October had a distinctly Ottoman-Damascene flavour. One Damascene object was a large frit-ware pot decorated in two shades of cobalt blue, some 46cm high and thought to be the largest Ottoman vessel of its kind produced in the sixteenth century. The pro-



LEFT: A DAMASCENE BLUE AND WHITE FRITWARE VASE, C.1575, BASED ON AN IZNIK PROTOTYPE. AT 46CM HIGH, IT IS THE LARGEST KNOWN VESSEL OF ITS KIND MADE ANYWHERE IN THE 16TH CENTURY IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE. ALTHOUGH THIS PIECE WITH ITS COBALT BLUE SAZ LEAVES FAILED TO REACH ITS RESERVE PRICE (EST: £50,000–70,000), IZNIK CONTINUED TO DO WELL AT SOTHEBY'S, WITH AN EARLY BLUE AND WHITE POT FETCHING £52,000

RIGHT: 'A TURKISH LADY WITH HER HAMMAM BOWL', FRENCH SCHOOL, 18TH CENTURY, OIL ON CANVAS, 92 X 80CM. THIS PAINTING, ESTIMATED AT £5,000–8,000, MORE THAN TRIPLED ITS UPPER ESTIMATE IN A SOTHEBY'S



LEFT: 'CONSTANTINOPLE', 1848, BY EDWARD LEAR (1812–88), WATERCOLOUR OVER TRACES OF PENCIL HEIGHTENED WITH WHITE, 17.5 X 37CM. LEAR WROTE OF THIS VISITOR'S VIEW OF THE CITY TO HIS SISTER: 'THE PERPETUAL CHANGE AS THE STEAMER MOVES ON, OF RUINED WALLS, IMMENSE DOMES – BRILLIANTLY WHITE MINARETS – & ALL MIXED WITH SUCH MAGNIFICENT CYPRESS, PINE AND PLANE FOLIAGE IS TRULY WONDERFUL'



LEFT: ONE OF A SERIES OF SIX TURKISH COSTUMES PAINTINGS, FRENCH SCHOOL, C 1800, OIL ON PAPER, 19.5 X 14CM, INSCRIBED IN FRENCH ON THE BACK. TURKISH GARB WAS THE HEIGHT OF FASHION IN 18TH-CENTURY FRANCE, INSPIRING NUMEROUS TOMES AND PAINTINGS. THE SERIES CARRIED A SOTHEBY'S ESTIMATE OF £2,000–3,000 BUT, UNLIKE THE LADY ABOVE, FAILED TO EXCITE BUYERS



ABOVE: WALL DECORATIONS ABOVE A CUPBOARD – PART OF AN ELABORATE INTERIOR FROM 18TH-CENTURY DAMASCUS, SOLD AT SOTHEBY'S FOR £130,000. RIGHT: A CHINESE INFLUENCE IS APPARENT IN THIS EXQUISITELY DECORATED OTTOMAN TOMBAK HELMET FROM THE 16TH CENTURY. IT FETCHED £95,000. FAR RIGHT: A SINIRNAME RECORDING THE DEMARCATION OF AN ANATOLIAN PROPERTY IN THE MID 15TH CENTURY, SOLD AT CHRISTIE'S FOR £20,125. BELOW: 'BOATMEN OF THE BOSPHORUS' BY FABIUS BREST (1823–1900), SOLD FOR £10,000 AT SOTHEBY'S



totype is clearly Iznik. Its place of manufacture has been disputed in the past, but both aesthetic and petrological evidence indicates Damascus as the place of origin. John Carswell of Sotheby's Islamic department dates the piece at 1575. Though surprisingly it did not reach its reserve price, an early Iznik pot of 1495–1510, related to tiles in the tomb of the Ottoman prince Şehzade Mahmud in Bursa, did fetch £52,000.

Centrepiece of the Sotheby's Islamic sale was a painted and gilded eighteenth-century interior from Damascus, which sold for £130,000. The first part of the interior has a mirrored ceiling pendant of carved leaves and grapes. It leads into the main room, which is decorated with fine carving and painted stucco, much of it gilded. Decorative motifs include wide interlacing bands with cartouches containing landscapes, houses and bouquets of flowers.

Sotheby's also offered some beautiful *tombak* (copper gilt) including a very fine helmet – probably an officer's parade-ground headgear. Its twenty-two flaring facets are alternately engraved with flowering lotuses. The finial has three cusped medallions and a spiked turban knop. The emblem of the Aya Irene arsenal is incised beside the nose-guard.

At Christie's, an Andalusian lion stole the show, but two Turkish objects of historical interest – no lashings of gold, just a sprinkling of silver – were a *smurname* (description of a property) and *ferman* (granting said property) from the reign of Mehmet the Conqueror. They are signed by some of the Sultan's leading men and go into precise details as to how the land has been assessed – up to the tree at the brow of the hill, down to the stream with the stone wall, etc. The *smurname* – a long scroll of calligraphy – sold for £20,125. ♦

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Making airwaves

BY DAVID BARCHARD

Imagine a railworker in Central Asia sitting up in the middle of the night, an Istanbul student drinking tea around midnight, and a kebab-house owner in Yorkshire taking his mid-evening break before the local pubs close. What do they have in common?

The answer is simple. They are all watching the same Turkish TV programme, one of ten Turkish satellite channels beamed across nearly half the world's main land mass. It may be a quiz show, or a documentary, or a pop concert performed before an audience in a Roman amphitheatre beside a seaside resort.

From Samarkand to Cork, a relatively select audience of about 120 million people tunes in to watch the glittering and unashamedly hedonistic world of Turkish satellite TV. Turkey is in the forefront of the television industry in late twentieth-century Europe and Western Asia. Only Germany and France offer more channels to their viewers.

On the face of it, Turkey's numerous and glitzy satellite TV channels represent an astonishing turnaround. TV came late to Turkey. In the early 1970s, programmes were only transmitted a few days each week. Colour TV arrived little more than a decade ago. Until the late 1990s, broadcasting was controlled by a strict state monopoly. In 1990, Mr Ahmet Özal, son of the late President Turgut Özal, decided to break the monopoly by setting up his own satellite TV station.

There were mutterings in the press, but the idea soon caught on. Today TRT (Turkish Radio and Television) continues to put out four domestic

channels and one satellite TV channel, but it has to co-exist with the private sector. Mr Özal's latest TV station, Kanal Altı (Channel Six), works from studios in Camden Town in London, but no viewer could ever guess this unaided. Kanal Altı has the best business and economic news on its breakfast show. On my way to work in Yorkshire, I tune in each morning to find out how the international stock market and money markets performed the previous day.

If you can't beat them, join them. Turkey's press barons no longer denounce satellite TV. Instead they have scrambled into the TV market. *Milliyet*,

A VARIED LIST OF SPARKLING DOCUMENTARY PRODUCTS, THE USUAL OFFERING OF DUBBED FILMS AND CARTOON SHOWS FROM THE US, CONCERTS, AND – LATER IN THE EVENING – DÉCOLLETÉ ENTERTAINMENT

the Istanbul daily, has launched experimental transmissions and is reported to be planning Turkey's first pay-TV encrypted station next year.

Since Turkish TV viewers can already feast for free on other channels, it remains to be seen how well pay-TV will do in the country. The current market front-runner is Show TV, owned by Mr Erol Aksoy,

one of Turkey's best-known bankers, who has linked up with *Hürriyet*.

Show TV offers viewers a varied list of sparkling documentary products, the usual offering of dubbed films and cartoon shows from the US, concerts, and – later in the evening – décolleté entertainment more familiar to German TV viewers than those in the UK. Even the advertisements become, well, frankly a touch sleazy as heavily peroxided beauties huskily confide to viewers that "The sort of man I dream about is a real Jack the Lad. Why don't you phone me?" and telephone numbers for pre-recorded chat lines flash up on to the screen.

Whether this sort of thing is worse than the blatant worldliness and uncomplicated materialism of the commercials and TV shopping channels, I am not qualified to say. To do it justice, Show TV undoubtedly also has most of the best documentary programmes.

Those who do not care to watch chorus lines of topless peroxide blondes can, at the flick of a remote controller, move to a different satellite station on TGRT, the broadcasting arm of *Türkiye Gazetesi*, often described as the main voice of religious fundamentalism in Turkey. They may get a Koranic reading or a religious lecture. But they may also encounter more familiar programmes: for in some ways, TGRT is very much like the rest of the pack. There are TV commercials for the fast, mainly Japanese, cars and nice homes. There are even quiz games in which blonde hostesses preside over a line of contestants (only on TGRT, some of the quiz show contestants wear the scarf and raincoat

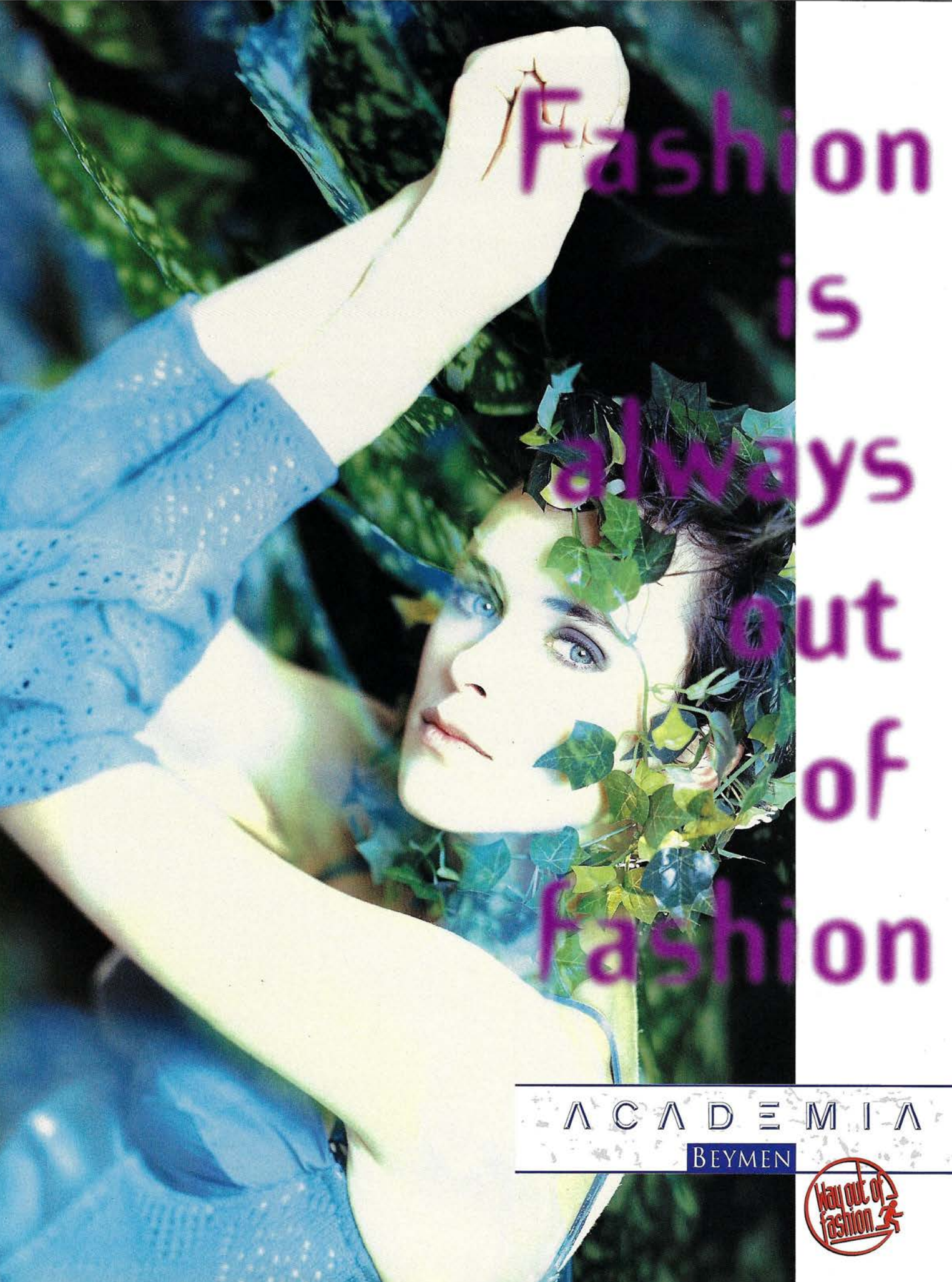
uniform which proclaims a certain cultural and religious orientation).

Can the Turkish market sustain eight different channels with a relatively small volume of advertising? Time alone will tell. Rumour has it that some of the late-comers to the market are finding the going tough.

Most problematic of all is the future of TRT, which still has massively larger resources to draw on than its competitors. Whether it makes the most of these is another matter. It has been transmitting a special international channel, called Avrasya, to the former Soviet Republics for over a year, but Avrasya's programmes and presenters often seem to assume that they are talking to an audience in downtown Ankara rather than people thousands of miles away who have never seen Turkey for themselves.

One special area where the private TV stations seem to be making the running is in news services. While staying carefully within the bounds of the communication idiom in Turkey, they have shown that news bulletins need not be a monotonous resumé of bureaucratic information.

Bureaucracy is exactly what Turkey's new-wave satellite TV is *not* about. Never, I suspect, since Hellenistic times in Anatolia has there been such a frankly hedonistic feast of all-singing all-dancing entertainment, aimed apparently at under-25s who speak Turkish with a generous lacing of pop-Anglo-Saxon. This is a cultural revolution being played out on flickering screens in drawing rooms across half the globe. TV may be a tired medium in many countries. In Turkey it seems endlessly zestful. ♦

A woman with blue eyes and dark hair is shown from the chest up, wearing a blue lace dress. She is surrounded by green leaves, some of which are in her hair. Her arms are raised, and she is looking upwards. The background is a blurred green foliage.

Fashion
is
always
out
of
fashion

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TRAIL OF SILK

A MISSION TO TIE UP THE LOOSE ENDS OF OTTOMAN SILK WEAVING HAS SENT NURHAN ATASOY AND HER TEAM OF FABRIC EXPERTS AROUND THE GLOBE IN SEARCH OF SCATTERED REMNANTS WITH AN EXOTIC TALE TO TELL. TIM STANLEY REPORTS

In 1989 one of Turkey's leading private banks, the Türk Ekonomi Bankası, created a good deal of publicity for itself by funding a major exhibition of Iznik pottery at the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts in Istanbul, and by underwriting the simultaneous publication of a magnificently illustrated book on the same subject by Professor Nurhan Atasoy, now dean of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Istanbul, and Dr Julian Raby, lecturer at Oxford.

The success of the project was assured by the high standards of both the exhibition and the book, together with the beauty of the ceramics themselves, and this has no doubt encouraged the bank to fund another, even more ambitious, undertaking, this time in the field of textile art. The subject is silk textiles of the Ottoman period.

The leading figure in the project is again Professor Atasoy, who has been joined by Hülya Tezcan of the



SILK TEXTILES FROM THE TOPKAPI PALACE MUSEUM.

ABOVE: TOBACCO POUCH OF BROCADED SILK WITH GOLD AND BLUE CARNATION MOTIF, LATE 16TH CENTURY. SILK KAFTANS WERE CUT SO AS TO WASTE AS LITTLE FABRIC AS POSSIBLE. OFFCUTS WERE MADE INTO ITEMS LIKE THIS. TOP: CUSHION COVER, 17TH CENTURY

Topkapı Palace Museum, Louise Mackie of the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto and Walter Denny of the University of Massachusetts. Individually these scholars already had a wide range of experience in the study of both the stylistic and the technical aspects of Ottoman textile history, but the resources provided by the bank have allowed them to assemble an unrivalled picture of the development of the luxury cloth industry in the Ottoman Empire. The team has been scouring the cathedral treasuries, palaces and museums of the world for examples of Turkish silk, armed with cameras (to record the pattern) and microscopes (to record the structure).

During its heyday in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the cloth produced by the silk-weavers of Bursa and other towns was employed in great quantities in the imperial palaces of the sultans. But it was also exported to Europe, to supply the courts there and to provide the

PHOTOGRAPHS: FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG



THE COURTS OF EUROPE WERE AWASH WITH THE DRAMATIC PATTERNS AND COLOURS OF OTTOMAN ART IN THE 17TH CENTURY — DESIGNS THAT OTTOMAN ARTISTS SELDOM CONFINED TO ANY ONE MEDIUM. IN THIS SILK BROCADE KAFTAN OF AHMET I IN TOPKAPI PALACE, MEDALLIONS FOUND IN ILLUMINATION AND BOOKBINDING ARE OF A SIZE UNTHINKABLE IN THE ARTS OF THE BOOK. THEY ARE FILLED WITH SPRAYS OF WHITE PLUM BLOSSOM, A DESIGN KNOWN FROM TILEWORK: HERE, THOUGH, THE GROUND IS RED, NOT ULTRAMARINE. THE FLOWERS ARE GOLD OUTLINED IN WHITE AND HAVE BECOME MORE RIGID, BEING ADAPTED TO THE SQUARE GRID OF THE LOOM



TWO CENTURIES OF OTTOMAN DESIGN ARE SUMMARISED IN THIS BROCADED SILK KAFTAN OF AHMET I: AN ELABORATE COMBINATION OF PALMETTE-BEARING TRELLIS, FEATHERY LEAVES, LOTUS FLOWERS, AND BLOSSOMS. THE TRELLIS IS FOUND ON 15TH-CENTURY TEXTILES; THE LOTUS WAS DOMINANT IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 16TH CENTURY; AND FLORAL MOTIFS WITH CULTIVATED SPECIES APPEARED SOME YEARS LATER. THE FINEST RED DYE WAS OBTAINED FROM KERMES BEETLES, ORIGIN OF THE TURKISH 'KIRMIZI' AND ENGLISH 'CRIMSON'. TOPKAPI PALACE MUSEUM



material for ecclesiastical vestments. Then, in the nineteenth century, an antiquarian interest in Turkish design led to the removal of historical textiles from tombs and palaces in Turkey and from churches and monasteries elsewhere in Europe, usually by unscrupulous dealers who cut them up and sold them piece by piece to collectors and museums in the West. The plus side was that the cloth, because it was always highly prized, had in most instances been looked after carefully.

Nurhan Atasoy and her team have been reversing this process. By combing every possible source they have been able to assemble a mass of evidence, and even to match individual pieces from textiles that were cut up during the last century.

The technical side of their investigations is also producing important results. One aspect of the work has been to collect sample threads from the fabrics they inspect and take them back to Istanbul for analysis by the dye expert Harald Böhmner. These threads can reveal the original colour of the cloth, where it has faded, and what dye was used: crimson or lake for red, for example.

Structural analysis of the silk is especially fruitful in the case of Turkish luxury textiles, since the study of style cannot tell anything like the full story. In fact, a great deal of confusion has been created by relying solely on the patterns and motifs that were used, as the designs that were employed on Turkish silks travelled far and wide and were repeated on silks made in

other centres, using different techniques. Analysis of the structure often reveals that silks that appear Turkish because of their pattern were actually made in workshops in Italy or Persia, for example.

Yet another aspect of the project is taking place in archives in Turkey and in the many other countries to which Ottoman textiles were exported. A team of historians is combing documents in at least half a dozen languages for references to the trade in

luxury fabrics. Once these have been collected, the next stage is to correlate them to the cloth itself. In this way the language of colours is being elucidated so that we will eventually accumulate all the terms used by Ottoman weavers themselves to refer to their colours: *nohudi* (literally "chickpea-coloured") and *fistiki* ("pistachio-coloured"), for example.

Archive material also reveals a great deal about the relative values of different cloths. For instance, the price of red kaftans was much higher if real crimson, derived from the kermes beetle, had been used, as opposed to red from sources such as lake.

The Ottoman Empire's near neighbours in Eastern Europe, particularly the Russian court, provided one of the great markets for Turkish silks. The disintegration of the Soviet Union has meant that access to the material in museums there has improved, but travel through some areas has been very risky. How many respectable ladies do you know who would travel from Suceava to Lviv on the Zam train, as Nurhan Atasoy and Hülya Tezcan have? And how would you deal with the customs on the Romanian-Ukrainian border when you have hundreds of kilos of valuable luggage?

All this has involved a great deal of hard work and courage. We can but admire the participants in this impressive project and the Türk Ekonomi Bankası for funding them. We can also look forward to a tremendous book and exhibition as the final product. ♦



A 17TH-CENTURY CEREMONIAL SLEEVE. LOTUS FLOWERS SET WITH TULIPS, BLOSSOM AND CARNATIONS ARE INTERSPERSED WITH TIGER STRIPES AND LEOPARD SPOTS THAT FIRST APPEARED IN MINIATURE PAINTING, ON HEROES DRESSED IN THE SKINS OF THE DANGEROUS BEASTS THEY KILLED. CEREMONIAL SLEEVES, DETACHABLE AND TOO NARROW TO PUT A HAND THROUGH, WERE HUNG BY OTTOMAN DIGNITARIES OVER THE BACK OF EACH SHOULDER—STILL AN ÖZBEK TRADITION IN CENTRAL ASIA. TOPKAPI PALACE MUSEUM



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BOOKS

Sublime to the meticulous

BY JOHN CARSWELL

Sinan: Ottoman Architecture and its Values Today

By Godfrey Goodwin

Saqi Books, London, 1993. £35

A Late 19th Century Tailor's Order Book (19.yy Sonuna Ait Bir Terzi Defteri)

By Hülya Tezcan

Sadberk Hanım Museum, Istanbul, 1992. TL75,000

To say that Godfrey Goodwin's book on Sinan is one of the most important books on Ottoman architecture in our lifetime might seem like exaggeration, but it is not. Unlike almost every other book on Turkish art and architecture, this is not concerned with minutiae, but rather takes on the whole issue of genius, and how to define it in Sinan's case. Most of us would rather admire Sinan from a safe distance, rather than try to analyse just why he was one of the transcendently great artists of all time. Goodwin has the courage to confront the subject head on and, more importantly, to link it to the major architectural movements of our own time.

This is a deceptively simple book, which at first glance appears to be a series of essays. All the basic facts are here, but what is more significant is the way in which they are manipulated. The writer approaches Sinan from a number of different directions, and just when you have grasped an illuminating point, he veers off and takes another tack. It is rather like sailing in unpredictable weather: you never know from one moment to the next what circumstances await you.

The facts about Sinan's life are few and startling. Born in

the fifteenth century, he died in the next, aged one hundred. He did not really start as an architect until his fifties; before that, he had a distinguished career as a military engineer. But without the skills that he learned during army life, he would never have been able to marshal the men and materials he needed for great enterprises such as the Süleymaniye complex. He was a traditionalist in the sense that he was aware of the Byzantine and early Ottoman legacies. Not for nothing was he put in charge of restoring the badly designed, infinitely collapsible sixth-century basilica of Ayasofya, from which he learned all the principles that he was to exploit so elegantly.

Every building he designed was an advance on the previous one. He was a master of the tricky site – witness what he did with the cascading topography on which he built the mosque of Sokullu Mehmet Pasha, and also the slopes on the eastern side of the Süleymaniye mosque.

In each case he didn't just solve the problem; he turned it into an integral part of the building and its originality. Nevertheless, despite the individual novelties of each project there is a consistency of style throughout his career. It is all the work of a single authoritative voice, and in a way this makes it quite easy to compare Sinan with a twentieth-century architect like Richard Neutra (except that Neutra did not do a great deal, at least not in relation to Sinan's massive output), or with another Muslim, the structural engineer Fazlur Khan. Khan, who died in Chicago aged fifty – just the age at which Sinan got going – designed the tallest building in the world (the Sears Tower) and a number of other truly original and remarkable build-

ings, including the Terminal Airport in Jeddah. Khan was a senior partner in Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, which had earlier designed the Hilton Hotel in Istanbul, when the resident genius was Gordon Bunschaft. The Hilton is still the greatest modern building in the Middle East in terms of space, siting and style, all of which would have appealed to Sinan. Although it has been ruined by successive waves of Hilton decorators, entering the front door to see that visionary prospect of the Bosphorus ahead is still one of the great experiences of the city. Bunschaft would be sad at the building's more recent excrescences, but the essence of his design has survived, and Sinan would certainly have approved.

To discuss a work on a late-nineteenth-century tailor in the same context might seem like bathos, but not in this case. This beautifully designed and printed book is the most recent of a series of monographs on the collections of the Sadberk Hanım Museum in Istanbul. One is inclined to take these catalogues for granted; the museum, after all, is a private and well-funded institution, and this could be seen as a natural expression of its affluence. However, everything that this museum has achieved so far in the field of documentation and interpretation has been the result of extremely hard work by a tiny band of curators, led by the energetic and inspiring Mrs Sevgi Gönül.

In her introduction, she charmingly downplays the latest achievement. The original tailor's book was, she says, an unexpected birthday gift from her husband Doğan. She explains that "while it's not my habit to relate every detail to my husband, that evening as we

were talking over the events of the day, I mentioned a visit to a shop and what we had found there". He immediately bought it for her as a surprise. "I never thought it would be of such interest," she adds, a little over-modestly.

Interesting it certainly is, for it is the sort of building block that makes up true scholarship. The French firm of Maison Palma et Fils was active between 1872 and 1902 in Istanbul. Like the life of Sinan, the company's ledger is full of direct links to contemporary patronage, in this case the court and other personalities in the city during the late nineteenth century.

Hülya Tezcan has done an excellent job of describing the register and relating its contents to what is known about the dress and ceremonial of the period from other sources. A new examination of the costume collection in the Topkapı Palace Museum has revealed the labels of Maison Palma et Fils on a number of garments, including the navy-blue uniforms, trousers and black redingote, all of which belonged to Sultan Abdülhamit II.

The ledger also specifically accounts for the introduction of a French style. Amusingly, one of the clients listed is Bedros Azarian, the original owner of the building at Büyükdere that now houses the Sadberk Hanım Museum.

The book is well illustrated, not only with colour plates of the clothes that the firm made, but also with examples of the labels that were sewn inside them.

In addition, there is also included a fascinating index of all the names mentioned in the ledger; it reads like a telephone directory, and many of the descendants of the clients listed are still around today. ♦

Books from Hamburg

BY PENNY OAKLEY

The majority of the exhibitions surrounding the Carpet Conference in Hamburg last summer were devoted to the various textile arts of Turkey and her dominions. Four of the accompanying catalogues indicate the great strides made in recent years in the study of Turkish art. They show, too, that it is a genuine love of Turkey among many European and American scholars that has generated the enthusiasm to achieve much of this. That must be something to make any patriotic Turk very proud of his heritage.

Orient Stars

A Carpet Collection

By E. Heinrich Kirchheim,

Michael Franses et al.

E. Heinrich Kirchheim, Stuttgart

& Hali Publications, London

1993. £160/DM385/\$240

This is the collection of Heinrich Kirchheim and his wife, Waltraut, which was assembled over just ten years – no mean achievement in itself. The essence of both the exhibition and the catalogue is courage. For many collectors, the public exposition of a collection is an ego trip, and so “beginner’s pieces” and mistakes are omitted. But this is not the case with the Kirchheims: they give us the lot, warts and all. Their professed aim is to demonstrate the way in which both the collection and the collectors’ own critical awareness evolved. Knowing how hard it is to find such high-flying pieces, and the enormous sums of money required, not to mention the inevitable emotional ups and downs involved, one can only applaud their dedication and determination.

Heinrich Kirchheim has showed further courage in delegating the writing of most of the text to five scholar-dealers, giving each one carte blanche in his section. Thus the result is

no sycophantic eulogy of collector and collection but an esoteric anthology of highly idiosyncratic opinions, some of them on totally unrelated philosophical planes.

One could be forgiven for thinking some of their concepts bizarre in the extreme – but every carpet scholar is entitled to his own opinions, as this is a fragile science. In particular, the study of early Anatolian carpets has virtually been reborn, as so many types have only recently emerged, many of them in this collection. They have opened up so many new avenues of research that we shall have to rewrite the history of carpet weaving. The collection and the book also include some hitherto undreamt-of early pieces discovered in Tibet, which revolutionise the subject and shatter many of our previously held notions.

However, one aspect is, on the whole, inadequately dealt with. Learning to understand rugs is like getting to know someone’s handwriting, so the study and comparison of structures is vital. Sadly, the technical analyses tend to be skimpy, with no overall standard. As the entire book was compiled in only seven months the omission is understandable, but not entirely pardonable.

Yayla, Form und Farbe in

Türkischer Textilkunst

By Werner Brüggemann

Frankfurt, 1993. DM98

(German edition only)

The last few years have witnessed the protracted wranglings of a “kilim war”, with passionate arguments over the symbolism of Anatolian kilim designs and whether or not they date back to the Neolithic period. Refreshingly, Werner Brüggemann’s *Yayla* lays aside this talk of the ancient mother goddess and her kind to concentrate on the origins of cer-

tain motifs, the development of design concepts and, perhaps the most vital ingredient, the impact of colour.

The subtitle “Form and Colour in Turkish Textile Art” sums up the profound effect that the powerful graphics and bold colours of Anatolian flatweaves have had on the modern eye, to the point where the entire topic has become something of a quasi-intellectual cult.

The message that comes through loud and clear is that Anatolian flatweaves are the offspring of a Turco-Islamic environment and of Turkish Anatolian culture, and not pre-Turkic as the “Neolithic” school has suggested. The author makes no bones about his belief that kilim and other flatweave designs have a Seljuk and Ottoman ancestry. Although he is diplomatic in his debunking of the mother goddess theory, his views will doubtless earn him a few brickbats from the good lady’s evangelically zealous champions. One can only hope that he has not provided them with enough heavy artillery to start another kilim war.

There has been a tendency of late to regard kilim-weaving as a totally different animal from carpet production. This book draws attention to the obvious cross-fertilisation between the two crafts. It also sets out to demonstrate that many types of carpet and kilim were woven side by side within the sphere of influence of Ottoman court art, even if only on the periphery at times. It is a pleasure to see this, as many carpet and kilim devotees suffer from tunnel vision and fail to see the two subjects as parts of a cultural whole.

Part of the argument is conducted by placing several versions of one design together, each one representing a stage in the movement away from the

original motif. This helps to explain some of the later examples that we encounter, which have deviated so far from the original as to be otherwise unrecognisable.

This book is a catholic work, with many unusual and some possibly unique pieces. It encourages one to examine more closely, and thus appreciate all the more, many relatively neglected groups. This visual experience is backed up by discussions of history, design and structure, with zappy colour pictures that make it a feast for the eye.

A Wealth of Silk and Velvet,

Ottoman Fabrics and

Embroideries.

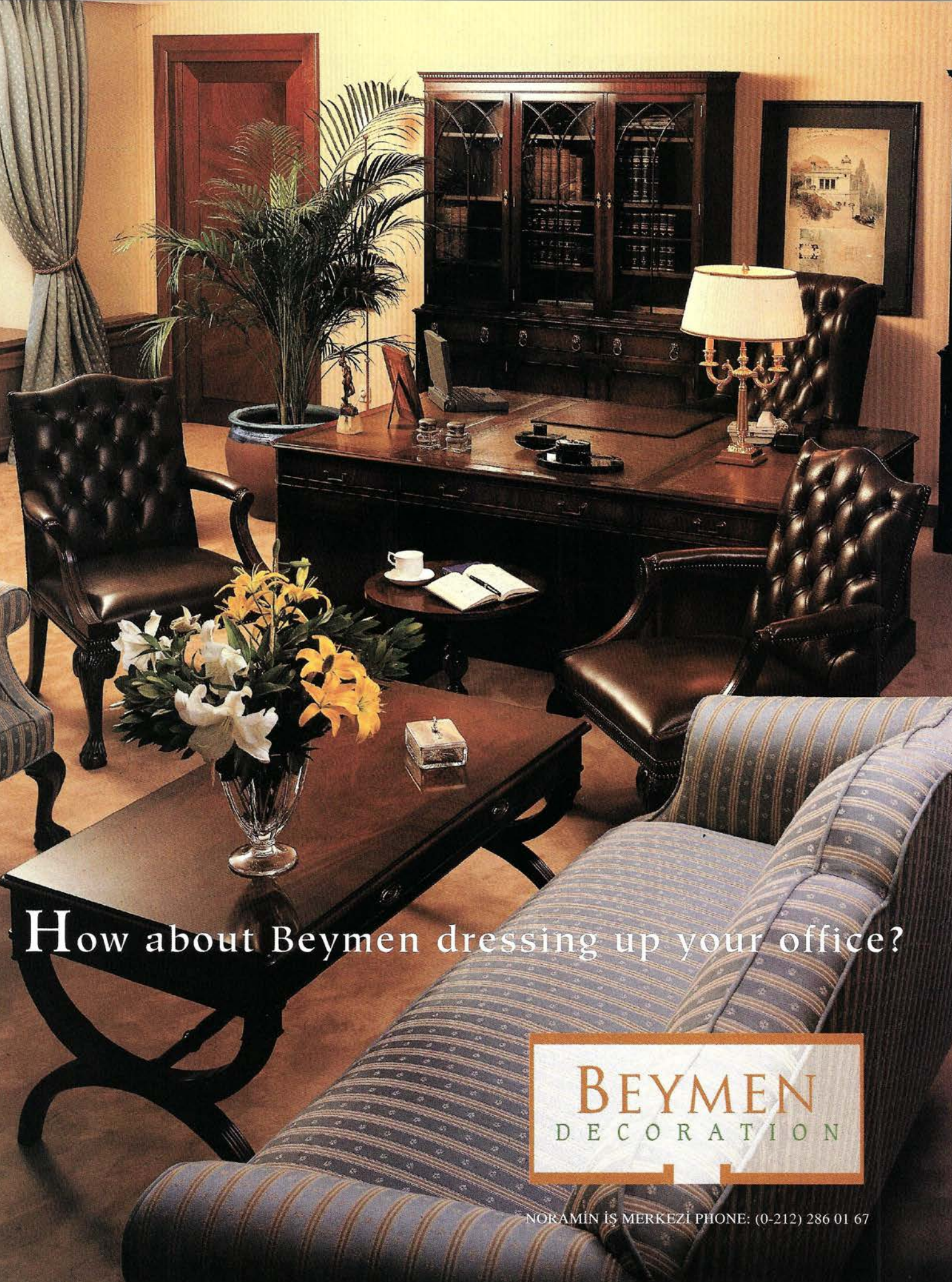
Edited by Christian Erber.

Bremen, 1993. DM125/£52

“Silk and Velvet” is the culmination of three individuals’ protracted pipedreams. Reinhard Neumann and Gisela Helmecke, who wrote the lion’s share, had harboured this project for years but, happily, it never came to fruition. Happily, because it would have been limited to East German holdings. Now, with Germany united, the catchment area is hugely increased. The third dreamer is Christian Erber, an ardent Turcophile and discerning collector, who took on – unpaid and voluntarily – the arduous job of editor and exhibition organiser.

One of the delights of *Silk and Velvet* is that it includes so many little-known pieces and a number of unfamiliar designs. It is always fascinating to discover how many permutations Ottoman designers could pull out of a comparatively restricted decorative repertoire – and here the list has been significantly expanded.

And oh, joy! The book gives very thorough structural analyses of both woven fabrics and embroideries – particularly the



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NORAMIN İŞ MERKEZİ PHONE: (0-212) 286 01 67

embroideries. Frustratingly few publications include this vital element. Also included are lists of comparative examples. A surprising number of respected scholars skip this highly important but time-consuming task. This book can therefore be forgiven for omitting only the odd one!

Until recently there has been a tendency to regard Ottoman embroideries as the poor relations of woven textiles. By publishing them together and grouping them by design, our attention is drawn to the undoubted influence of velvet and brocade designs on the embroideries. Even so, a closer look at the relationship with Iznik tile panels and other arts in the genre would have encouraged further understanding.

The English translation leaves something to be desired and, in some cases, one could argue with the dating. But this is still an imprecise science, and most writers are shy of committing themselves in print. At least, however, someone has put their head above the parapet and publicly attributed one distinct group of Ottoman embroideries to Epirus in Greece – although sometimes with a timorous and, to me, superfluous question mark.

We must be grateful that our three dreamers finally produced such a constructive and enjoyable volume, something of a pioneer in its field, and is packed with the most scrumptious Ottoman textiles!

Floral Messages:
From Ottoman Court
Embroideries to
Anatolian Trousseau Chests
By Ulla Ther.
Bremen, 1993. DM125/£52

This is a delicious catalogue of the best of those charming eighteenth- and nineteenth-century domestic embroideries, or *işlemeler*, that are so often

thoughtlessly just lumped together under the name of "Turkish towels".

Though frivolous and intensely feminine, these pieces still retain the uplifting exuberance that is such an attractive element of Turkish art. Intricate but never fussy, most of these pieces suggest a romantic peep-show into a colourful, magical world.

There are flotillas of jaunty ships flirting with the wind; flower-decked pleasure domes in paradise gardens; tiny silvered kiosks nestling in cypress groves; gaily striped battle tents and pavilions for princely picnics; ripened grapes and rounded melons gilded as if they are destined for a heavenly feast – and roses, roses all the way.

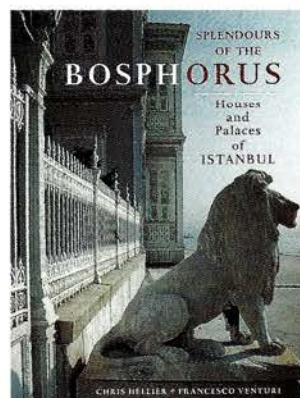
Most surreal of all the designs are the goofy elephants confronting each other: they look more like rioting unicorns and a herd of crazy pink prancing ponies.

The pieces are all drawn from German collections and have been assembled by the author, Ulla Ther, who has lived in Turkey and is an avid collector herself. Both her good taste and her passion for these enchanting little marriage pieces shine out of the book's pages. Those cynical textile historians who had previously condemned *işlemeler* as being simply over-pretty bits of nonsense have now been persuaded to re-evaluate them.

Here, the embroideries are grouped sensibly by design and provenance, so that even a cursory glance through the catalogue reveals a number of marked regional characteristics many of which had previously been ignored.

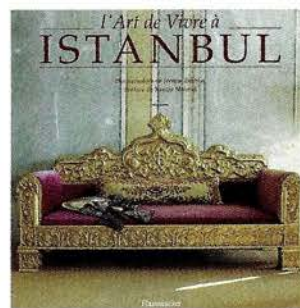
This joyous, light-hearted volume also has a serious academic content, which will help to put these silken little gems firmly on to the art-historical map. ♦

ESSENTIAL NEW TITLES



Splendours of the Bosphorus
Houses and Palaces of Istanbul
By Chris Hellier
Photographs by Francesco
Venturi and Chris Hellier
Tauris Parke Books,
London, 1993. £34

The first full-blown pictorial record this century of the surviving houses and palaces of the Bosphorus. Crystal clear photography, particularly suited to late Ottoman architecture.



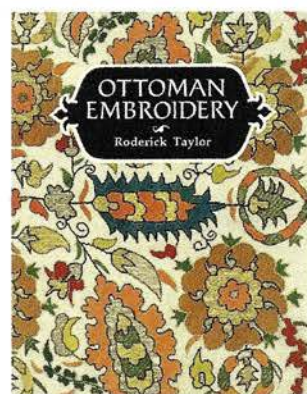
L'Art de Vivre à Istanbul
Preface by Kenizé Mourad
Photographs
by Jérôme Darblay
Flammarion, Paris, 1993

A brilliant celebration of fine living in Istanbul, part of a series that ranges from Japan to Venice. Mouthwatering interiors. An English edition follows.



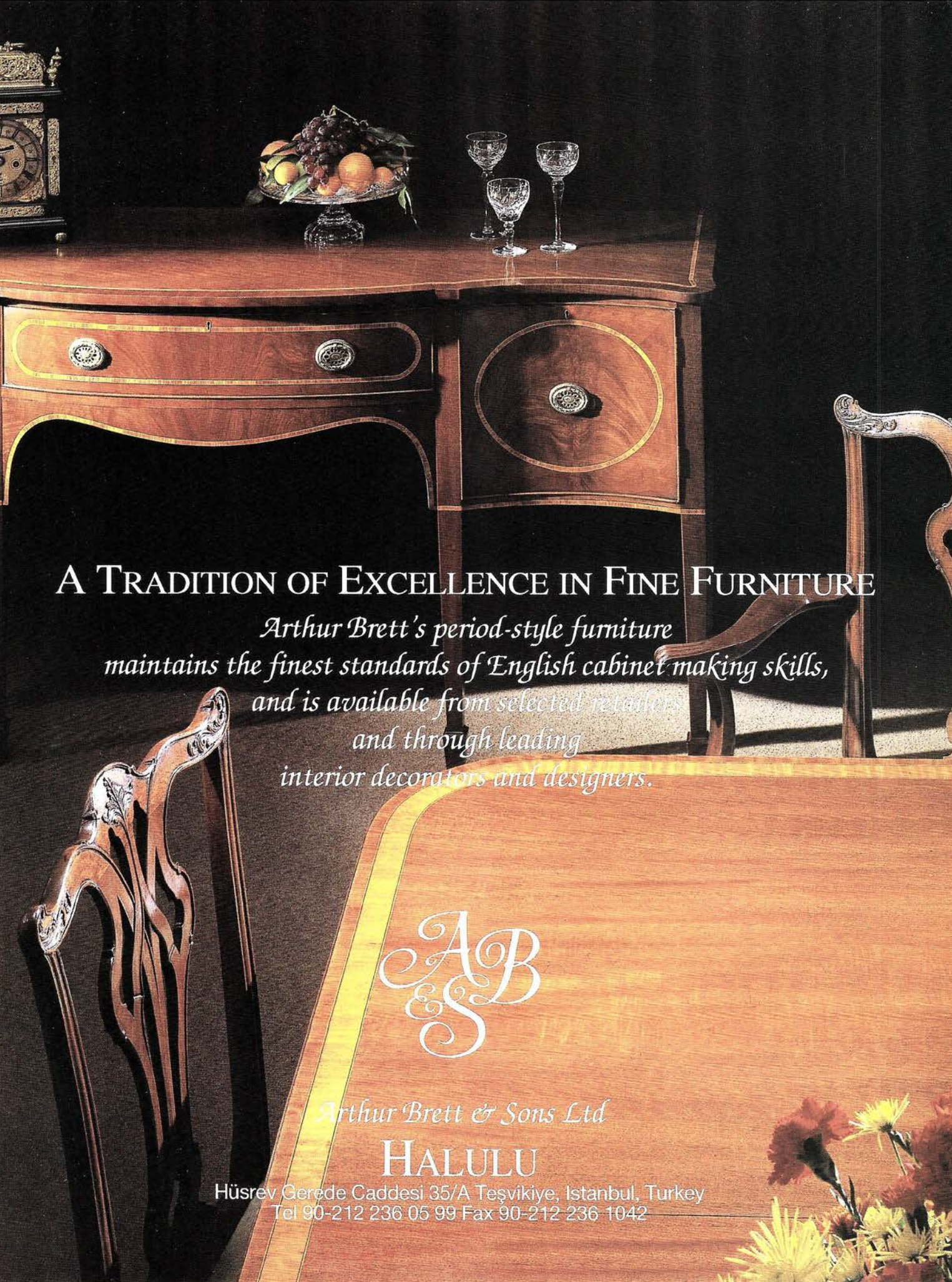
Images d'Empire
aux Origines de la
Photographie en Turquie
By Nazan Ölçer, Engin Çizgen,
Gilbert Beaugé and François
Neuville. 1993. TL250,000

This beautifully illustrated catalogue of a recent exhibition at the İbrahim Paşa Sarayı (Museum of Turkish-Islamic Art) is a must for anyone who is interested in *fin de siècle* Turkey.



Ottoman Embroidery
By Roderick Taylor
Marston House, Yeovil
and the Ministry of Culture
of Turkey, 1993. £50

The ingenious use of decorative details and colours is beautifully borne out in the 140 photographs illustrating this indispensable volume. Most embroideries are nineteenth century. They covered everything, from simple handkerchiefs to palace kaftans. The variety is stunning.



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Kaitag: Textile Art
from Daghestan
By Robert Chenciner
Textile Art Publications
London, 1993. £75

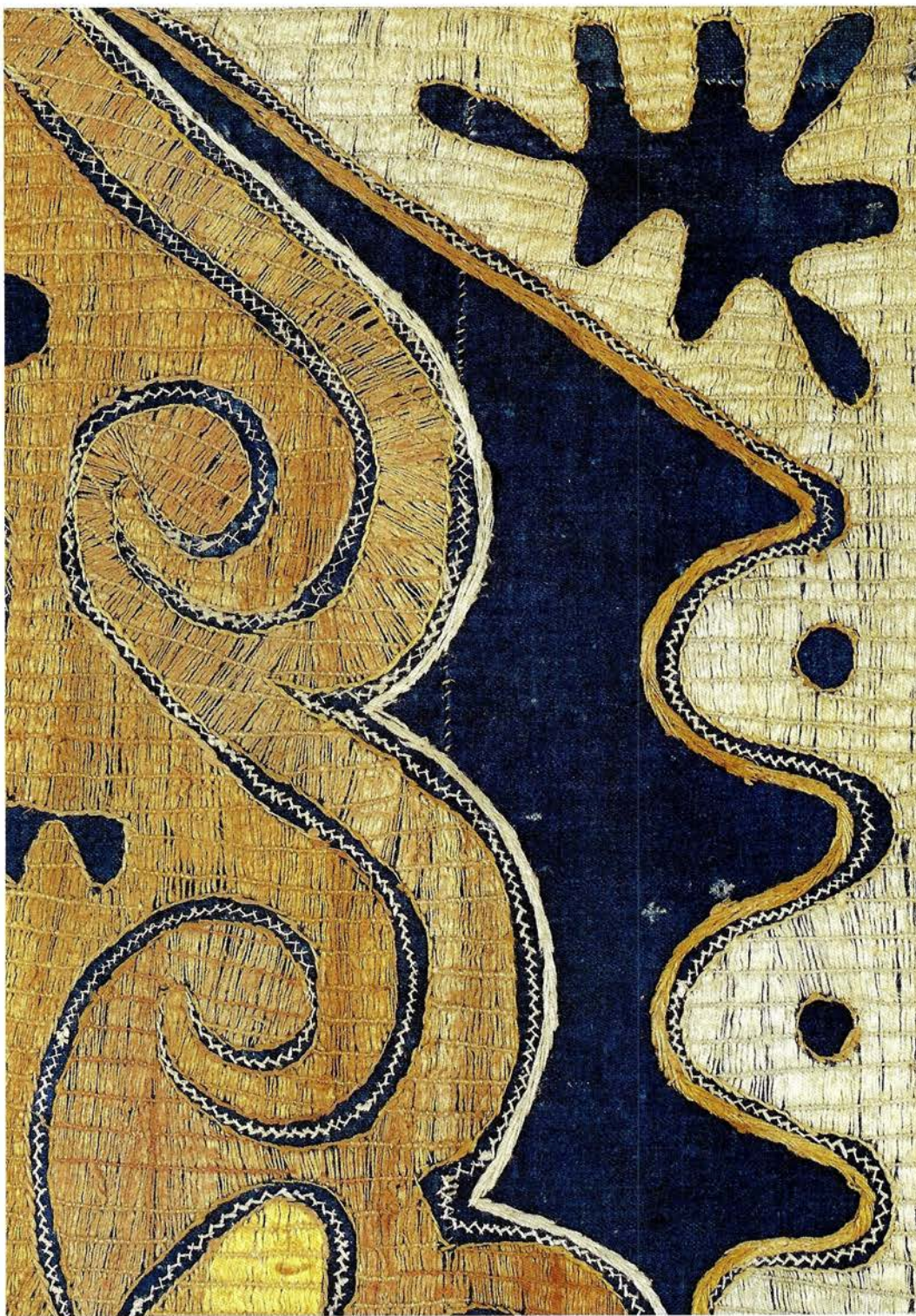
This is one of the most absorbing books on art published in the past year: the first survey of the village embroideries of the Kaitag, a small, little-known group of peoples in the inaccessible Caucasian lowlands and mountains north of Derbent in Daghestan.

Robert Chenciner has been researching the subject since 1986 and the introduction to the book includes photographs of brooding landscapes from his travels. The catalogue contains 171 pieces, and the colour illustrations make the most of the staggering repertoire of patterns and colours in Kaitag art.

For all its apparent isolation, the area has been subjected to waves of settlers. Paganism, Zoroastrianism, Islam, Judaism and Christianity are all discernible in the embroidery. In addition to decorative Ottoman and Coptic motifs, there is often a deep-rooted talismanic and zoomorphic symbolism. According to Chenciner, even earthquakes have shaped the imagery.

Kaitag embroideries are silk on cotton, rectangular in shape and display numerous knots and dyes. No less than eleven yellows, three reds, two blues, one black and four greens have been identified so far. Most dyes were produced locally – madder was exported from Derbent – though lac was probably imported from India and cochineal from Armenia.

Most known Kaitag art dates from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries. Sadly, the traditional art of embroidery was stamped out under Soviet rule, though Chenciner during his research met elderly women able to recall the symbolism and the extraordinary rites associated with embroideries. ♦

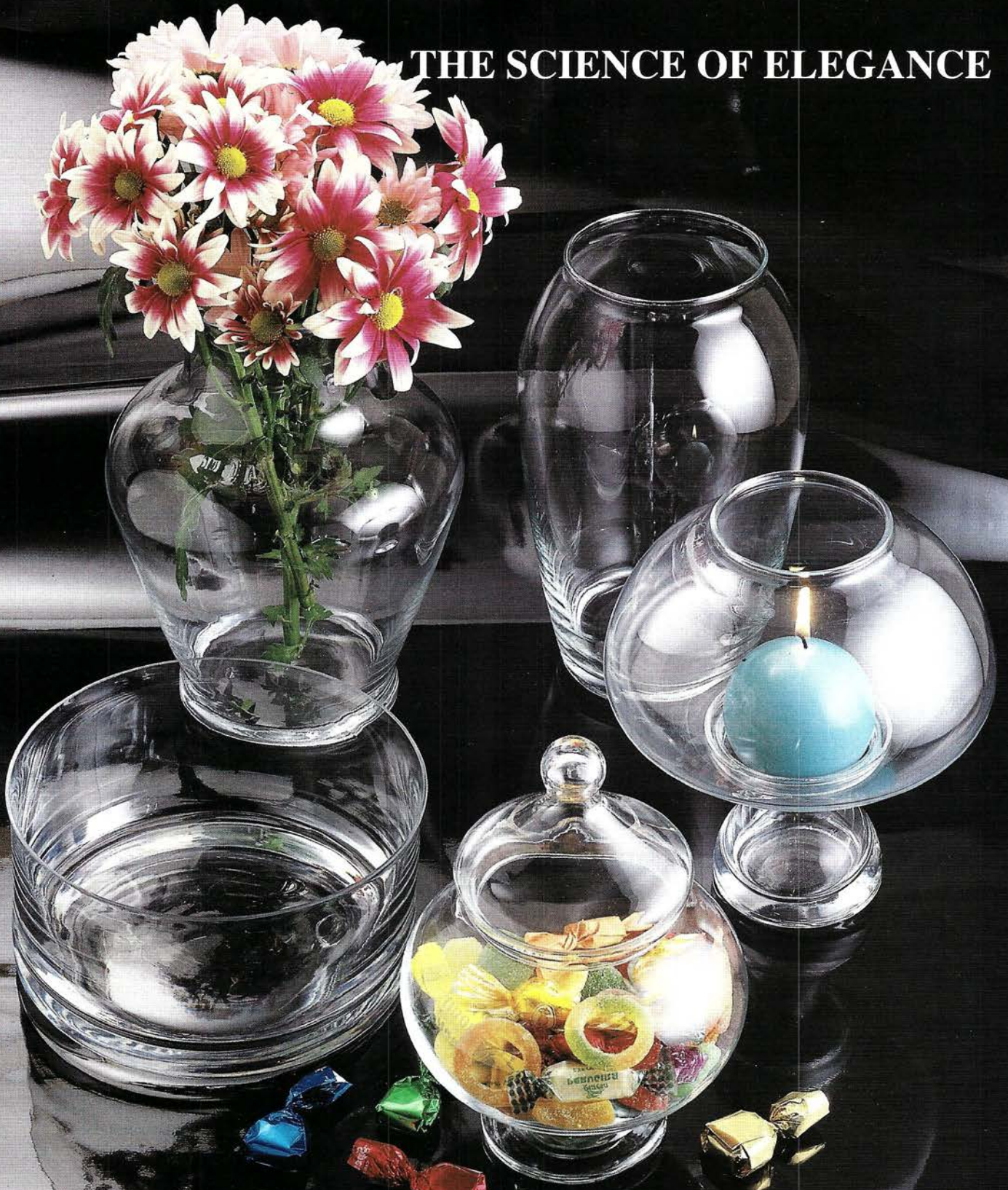




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Waterway madness

By JOHN MURRAY BROWN

NOT LONG AGO it was a regular event to see diplomats on the banks of the Bosphorus craning with their binoculars as the latest Soviet battleship made its passage through the long, narrow straits that divide Europe and Asia.

With the demise of the Soviet Union, and with the new states of Russia and the Ukraine publicly disputing their claims to what is left of the mighty Black Sea fleet, spying is a little different these days.

The job of monitoring traffic passing through the Bosphorus is no less demanding, however. Indeed, the issue is of growing urgency as Turkish officials brace themselves for a sharp increase in transit trade.

For a multitude of new customers the Bosphorus looks like offering the best outlet to the markets of the West. An attempt is already under way to breathe fresh life into the sleepy economies of the Black Sea – an initiative which owes much to the foresight of the late President Turgut Özal. The Central European canal system linking it with the Danube is complete, adding to the volume of shipping likely to want to go through the straits.

If in addition the resource-rich countries of Central Asia decide to ferry their oil and other products through the Black Sea, this will further increase the congestion. According to Botaş, Turkey's state pipeline corporation, if Kazakhstan



THIS PAGE AND OVERLEAF, LULL BEFORE THE STORM: DOES MORE BOSPHORUS TRAFFIC SPELL TROUBLE?

is to transport its crude production to Europe by this route, this alone would raise the number of supertankers in transit by as many as three a day.

Clearly the authorities are concerned that with the traffic increase there is a greater probability of accidents in what is not only a major residential area but also an important thoroughfare for the hundreds of municipal boats that ply the Bosphorus every day, taking

commuters to and from work.

The Bosphorus is considered one of the most treacherous waterways in the world. Its channel is described by sailors as "restricted". It is not only very narrow – less than 600 metres across at one point – but the currents can be as strong as forty knots and are quite random in nature. In addition, ships have to negotiate twelve different turns. Captains are advised to have their anchors ready as they take the Bosphorus passage, just in case the rudder breaks or the engines fail.

Ankara is already considering whether to break a sixty-year-old tradition by introducing charges for going through the Bosphorus, in an effort to offset the investment costs of a proposed new radar system. Even the treaty of Montreux,

which has defined the regime for the Bosphorus since the 1930s and guarantees unhindered passage for ships in peacetime, seems up for grabs.

Turkey feels its hands are tied. Under Montreux there are few restrictions on traffic. Warships are obliged to notify the signatory countries when they go through the straits, a condition which was of vital importance when the Western powers were keeping tabs on the Soviets. Turkey caused a minor row last year when port authorities in Istanbul seized the *Cape Malleas*, a Greek Cypriot-registered ship laden with arms destined for Iran. The incident prompted strong protests from Tehran. The Istanbul public prosecutor hearing the case defended the action on the grounds that Turkey was still at war with



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN BRUNTON

THE CURRENT NETWORK RELIES ON THE KEEN EYESIGHT OF THE CREW ON THE BRIDGE – WITH PREDICTABLE RESULTS



Greek Cyprus, a judgment which caused a certain frisson of embarrassment for the Foreign Ministry in Ankara before it was overruled.

Otherwise, Turkey exerts few controls, particularly over commercial traffic. Only by insisting on making the statutory sanitary inspection of vessels waiting to enter the Bosphorus can port authorities regulate the number of ships.

"If we have a good radar system, we can manage twice the volume of traffic," says Dr Demir Sindel, professor of maritime engineering at Istanbul Technical University. "But we must earn money from this. At the moment we have expenses but no income."

Sanitary dues, together with lighthouse dues and safety charges, are currently the only source of revenue. "Nowhere in the world can such a service be provided free of charge," says Yaşar Topçu, the former Turkish transport minister. The conditions of Montreux are out of date and should be modernised, he says.

One source of revenues is the use of a pilot by a merchant ship. But under the terms of Montreux, pilotage is not mandatory. Kenan Öner, head of the Turkish Maritime Organisation, estimates that of the 40,000 ships that ply the Bosphorus every year, only half take pilots. Moreover there is no limit to the capacity of the vessels that can take the course. Öner says there are still a number of supertankers of more than a quarter of a million dead-weight tonnes that sail the Bosphorus.

The single greatest danger is a collision involving one of the vast vessels carrying a highly inflammable cargo of liquefied gas. "This is much more threatening than a warship," says Dr Sindel, who has spent the last twenty-five years developing computer models to try to anticipate disasters such as this.

Ten companies have submitted bids to install active radar. According to one foreign expert, the project will provide Turkey with the marine equivalent of an air traffic control system. The current network, comprising just three passive radar units, at Kızkulesi, Kandilli and Umuryeri, relies all too heavily on the keen eyesight of the crew on the bridge – with predictable results.

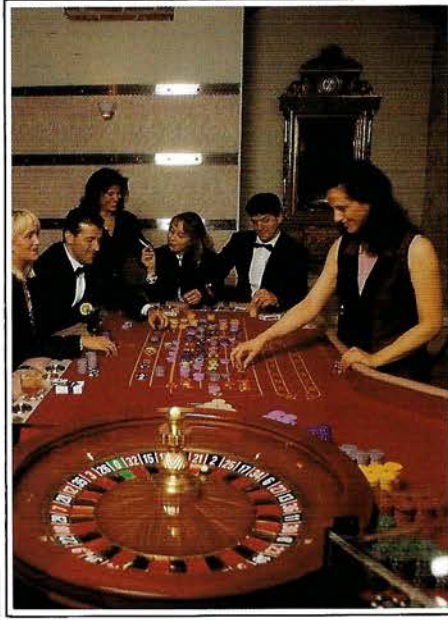
In the Masters' Guide to Passage through the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, the Ports Administration lists twenty recent accidents in the hope that "the sorrowful casualties which occurred in these straits will make you more careful". The most notorious was the case of the Romanian oil tanker the *Independenta*, which collided with a Greek coaster on the night of November 15, 1979. More than forty lives were lost, and the ship could be seen burning for months at the southern mouth of the Bosphorus.

Dr Sindel says there is on average one major collision every year. In 1991 a Romanian ship hit a jetty and sank near the Fatih Bridge, spilling its cargo of 20,000 sheep into the Bosphorus, much to the dismay of the owners of the old wooden houses that line the shore. The authorities are still busy assessing the environmental impact of that particular accident.

Ironically, such incidents currently constitute the only source of benefit for Turkey in its costly management of the Bosphorus. Apart from the statutory compensation paid to the port authorities and the legal claims involved, a disaster like an oil spill allows the authorities to stop the traffic while jobs are created to clear up the area.

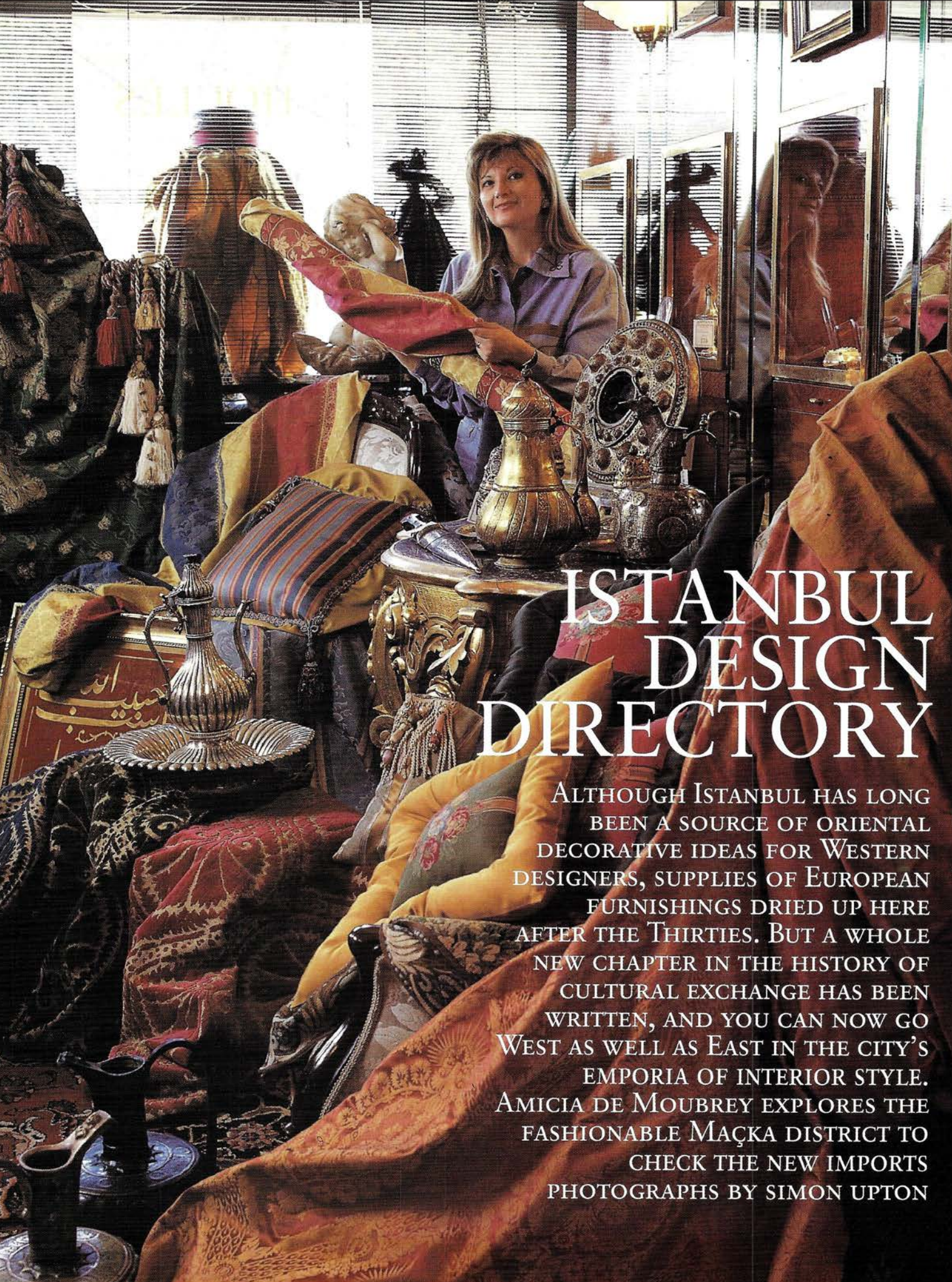
According to the professor's calculations, Turkey would need an accident every day to be able to manage the Bosphorus like a real business. ♦

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ELEGANCE IN GAMING

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a purple button-down shirt, stands in a shop filled with traditional Turkish goods. She is holding a long, narrow scarf with a vibrant red, yellow, and blue pattern. The shop is densely packed with various items: large patterned carpets, colorful cushions, and several ornate metal vessels, including brass and silver teapots and trays. In the background, a mannequin is dressed in a traditional turban and robe. The lighting is warm, highlighting the textures of the fabrics and the intricate designs of the metalware.

ISTANBUL DESIGN DIRECTORY

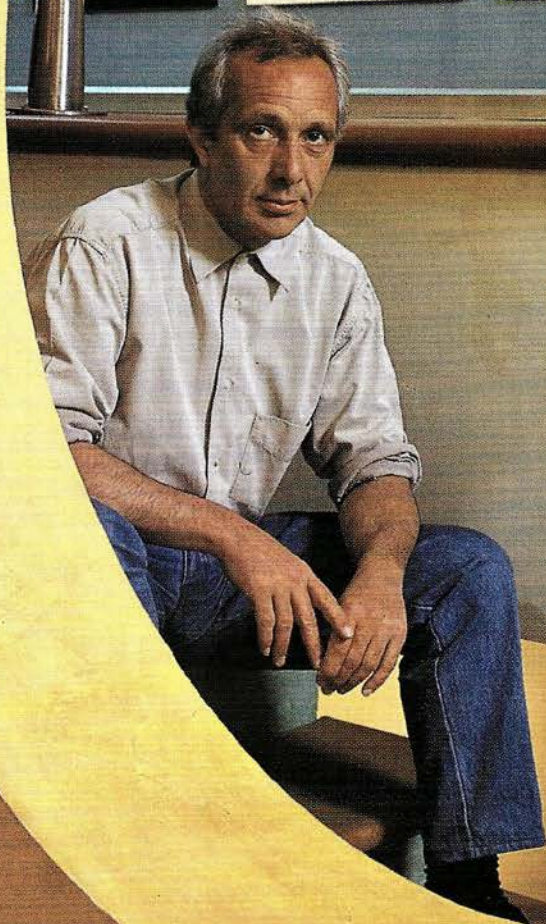
ALTHOUGH ISTANBUL HAS LONG BEEN A SOURCE OF ORIENTAL DECORATIVE IDEAS FOR WESTERN DESIGNERS, SUPPLIES OF EUROPEAN FURNISHINGS DRIED UP HERE AFTER THE THIRTIES. BUT A WHOLE NEW CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF CULTURAL EXCHANGE HAS BEEN WRITTEN, AND YOU CAN NOW GO WEST AS WELL AS EAST IN THE CITY'S EMPORIA OF INTERIOR STYLE. AMICIA DE MOUBREY EXPLORES THE FASHIONABLE MAÇKA DISTRICT TO CHECK THE NEW IMPORTS
PHOTOGRAPHS BY SIMON UPTON

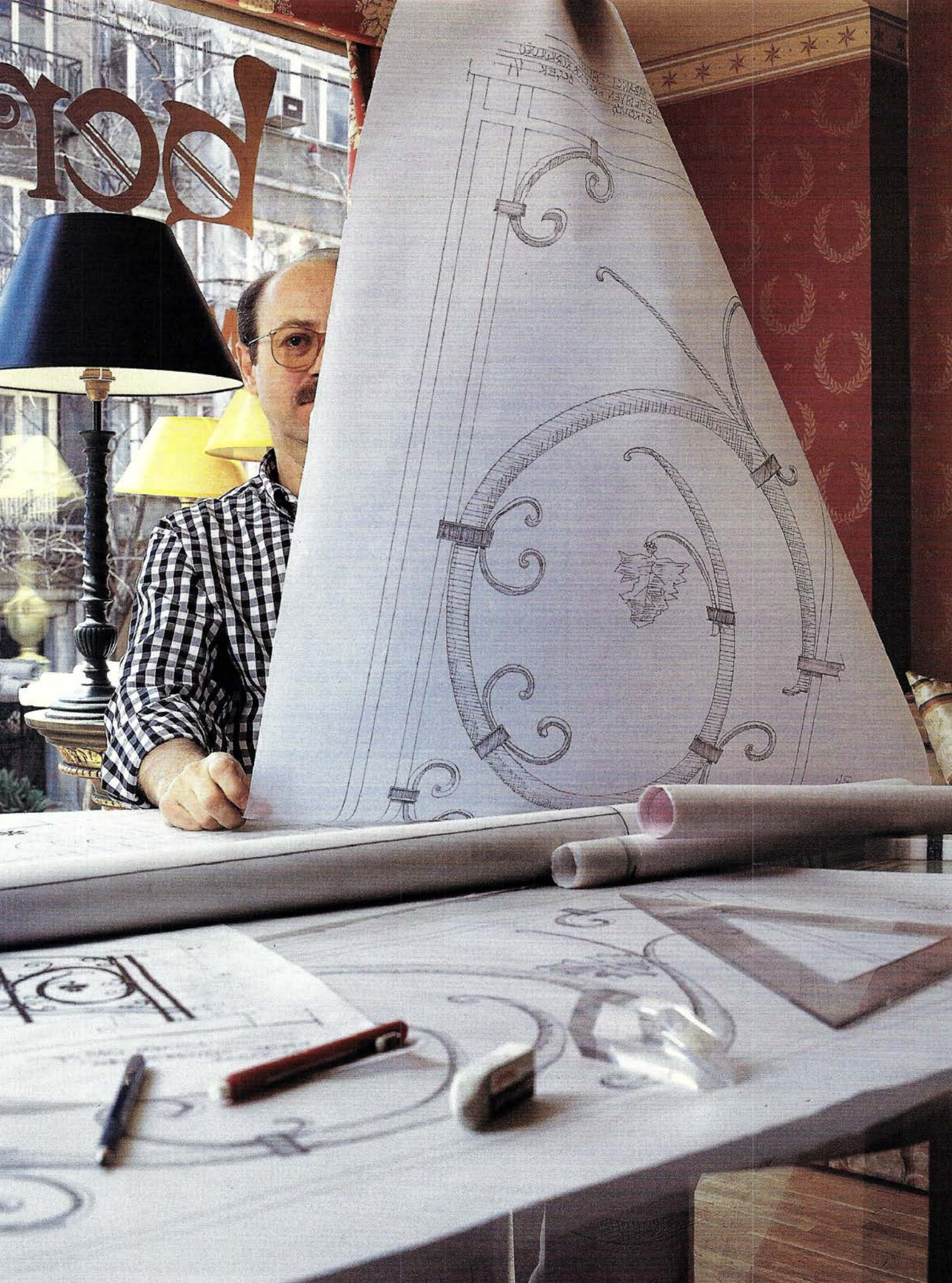
INDOORS

In just one year Nesrin Takil's Indoors (left) has established a reputation as the place to go for the opulent look. It has a wide selection of damasks, velvets and woven fabrics in every colour of the rainbow, sourced from France, Italy, Germany and England, as well as fabrics from Nobilis Fontan and G.P. & J. Baker, and trimmings from Houles and Fadini Borghi. Those who want luxury in the bathroom can order silver- or gold-plated taps from Sherle Wagner in New York. "I like to get involved in customers' decorating problems, and have built up a list of specialist craftsmen I can call upon to help," says Nesrin. She aims to deliver fabric orders within fifteen days. Mim Kemal Öke Caddesi 7 Nişantaşı, İstanbul
Tel (212) 230 4954 or 225 0043
Fax (212) 230 9420

GLOB

Glob has a dramatic modern interior designed to show off the very latest in kitchen design from the Italian firm Boffi, "who are always one step ahead of everyone else," says İrfan Kuriş (this page). There are also handsome antique-style bathroom fittings from England, slick Italian designer lights, rugs from Trussardi, fashionable sisal flooring from Crucial Trading in London, a wide range of terracotta floor tiles and a whole host of coloured tiles in every conceivable shape and size. The eight different kitchens on offer, which include a particularly smart hornbeam and stainless steel model, start at TL60 million and can be delivered within two and a half months once the design has been agreed. Glob is then responsible for three years if anything goes wrong. Abdi İpekçi Cad 5, Park Apt.
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Istanbul has long been a source of inspiration for interior designers. Given the city's history it is not surprising that the myriad styles and patterns accumulated over the centuries have spawned a thousand oriental interiors from Paris to New York. Today there is a diverse assortment of merchandise to choose from, neatly divided geographically between the old and the new city. For those in search of the mystique of old Istanbul, the Covered Bazaar and its immediate

environs harbour all sorts of delights, well worth battling one's way through the crowds for. It is an experience buying even the smallest of items and watching the careful attention paid to the wrapping of your purchase, which is often tied up with string from a dispenser located somewhere up the wall. But for those in search of fabrics, decorative objects, wallpaper and furniture from Europe, the place to go is the fashionable Maçka district, the centre of the rapidly expanding interior design industry.

BERGERE

Bergère (left) is one of the oldest interior decorating specialists in Istanbul, having opened twelve years ago. The decor of the shop changes annually to reflect current trends; this year bright warm colours set the scene. The stock includes fabrics by Osborne & Little, Nina Campbell, Spanish fabrics by Sirte and Rafael Catala and Spanish neoclassical-style lamps. The owners – Mehmet, Şükran and Nur Emek – are architects and can undertake

the complete remodelling of any interior, right down to the making of sofas, chairs, kitchens and even Jacuzzis. Abdi İpekçi Caddesi 47 Maçka, Istanbul
Tel (212) 230 8139 or 246 5463 or 246 1379
Fax (212) 246 5171

A DAY OF DESIGN

At Vicki Hünel's shop (above) you will find a sophisticated mix of furniture, fabrics and decorative objects. The subtle colours that characterise French fabrics are represented here by the Parisian company Pierre Frey, many of whose designs are inspired by eighteenth-century documents. At the other end of the spectrum are Designers Guild's distinctive brightly coloured wallpapers and fabrics. There are also American fabrics by Brunshawig

& Fils. The basement is arranged as a series of little rooms with a diverse range of furniture, including elegant bamboo pieces from the Banyan Tree in Hong Kong, old Turkish carved and painted benches and metalwork occasional tables. Atiye Sokak 7/4, Ak Apt. Teşvikiye, Istanbul
Tel (212) 247 3206 or 231 3676
Fax (212) 231 5385



ABOVE: SELDEN EMRE AMID THE INTRIGUING CLUTTER OF HER TEŞVİKİYE ANTIQUE SHOP. CURIOSITIES INCLUDE A FOUR-POSTER BED, AN ENGLISH PICNIC BOX FROM OLD BOND STREET, A FRENCH FIRE SCREEN (RIGHT) AND AN OTTOMAN EMBROIDERED SILK DRESSING GOWN



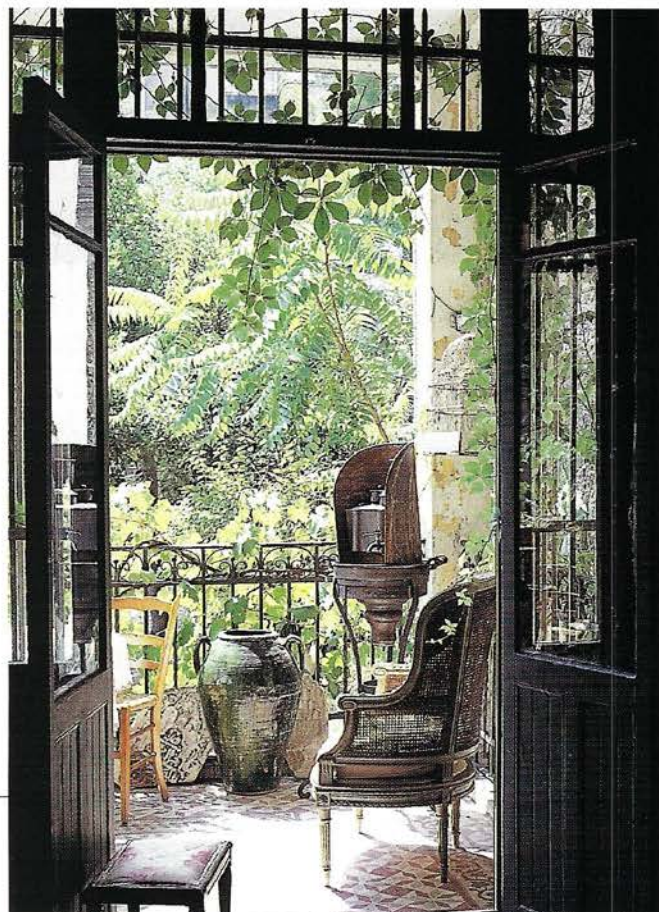


LEFT: HAYRI ÇİZEL'S PAINTINGS OF HIS WIFE CANAN. TOP RIGHT: OTTOMAN SPOONS MADE OF IVORY, TORTOISESHELL AND FISH TEETH. RIGHT: ON THE BALCONY IS A 'DEMLİK' FOR TEA AND COFFEE, AS USED IN OUTDOOR CAFÉS; BESIDE IT IS A GLAZED POT FROM TOKAT



SELDEN EMRE

Selden Emre stocks an idiosyncratic collection of decorative objects, furniture and textiles, some antique and some "slightly old". "I buy what I like," says Selden (left), whose mother was also an antique dealer. An unusual but highly decorative collection of about twenty paintings by the Turkish painter Hayri Çizel of his wife, painted c.1902-20, is on offer for US\$15,000. Other treasures include framed panels of calligraphy, an English picnic set from the 1890s in its original box, a massive four-poster bed said to have been made for a mansion in the Istanbul district of Moda that belonged to the Whittall family, established over several generations as consular agents in the Ottoman domains, and a nineteenth-century Ottoman embroidered silk gown. Teşvikiye Caddesi 99/1 Teşvikiye, Istanbul Tel/fax (212) 236 1574





BIO DESIGN

A striking interior reminiscent of a New York loft, with its high ceiling and bare brick walls, is home to a wide selection of furniture made in a Spanish factory in Indonesia from materials such as rattan, wood and iron. İpek Topçu (above), who runs the shop, believes that natural materials create a comfortable mood. As well as rattan sofas and chairs, Bio offers garden accessories such as umbrellas, pergolas, oil lamps and wooden gazebos. The shop is in the heart of Beyoğlu, the former Pera, the district that represented

cosmopolitan Istanbul in the nineteenth century, before Maçka assumed this role. Meşrutiyet Caddesi 145 Tepebaşı Beyoğlu, İstanbul
Tel (212) 251 4078
Fax (212) 246 4490

RAFFI PORTAKAL

A superb and diverse collection of antiques, paintings and *objets d'art* is on offer here. Stepping into the palatial premises opposite Raffi's gallery, one immediately feels the silent and awesome presence of rare and important works of art. The stock includes Russian and European silver, nineteenth-century orientalist paintings, French and English antique furniture, Italian and Turkish glass, exquisite calligraphy panels and tools, and French and Bohemian glass chandeliers. Raffi also runs courses exploring the history of both

Turkish and European art, in addition to holding auctions twice a year. Mim Kemal Öke Caddesi 19 Nişantaşı, İstanbul
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MAÇKA DEKOR

Cemaliye Bezmen and Erdinç Tezer's palatial showroom is the perfect setting for English country house chintzes by Colefax & Fowler. Also available are smart painted curtain pole finials and tassels from their Holbein Collection, pretty Anna French lace curtains, elegant English lamps by Vaughan and other English fabrics by Anna French, Jane Churchill, Tittle & Marr and Daniel Ellis. Seekers of sumptuous silks and taffetas should note that Maçka Dekor are now the representatives of Sacho Hesslein. Also on offer are decorative objects such as iron chandeliers with mosque lights, and a pair of nineteenth-century Anatolian doors. Maçka Caddesi 32 Teşvikiye, Istanbul Tel (212) 227 0215 or 227 6030 Fax (212) 259 2749



ENGLISH CLASSICS

The name is an apt description for what is on offer here: grand, deeply upholstered furniture from George Smith of London; subtle, understated fabrics by Bennis and George Smith; tapestry cushions from Belinda Coote of Kensington; leather chesterfield sofas; and sofas fashionably upholstered with kilims. Lights by English specialist Christopher Wray are also available.

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Established in 1953, Güngör Dekorasyon specialises in designing interiors and furniture. To begin with, furnishings were imported from Italy, but in 1975 they set up their own line of furnishings in Istanbul. Today the workshop employs seventy-five people and supplies a huge range of styles for customers in Istanbul and other parts of the world including Singapore, Los Angeles, Finland and Japan. Neoclassical, Biedermeier, Chinese – you name it, Güngör can supply it. Maçka Caddesi 5 Maçka, Istanbul Tel (212) 247 1700 / 240 8655 Fax (212) 231 2866

CARPETS

While most Istanbul carpet dealers are in the Bazaar, in Maçka people in the know call on Güneş Öztarakçı. She has a good selection of wool and silk rugs at spacious premises at Mim Kemal Öke Caddesi 5, Nişantaşı. Tel (212) 225 1954, or 225 1968. Fax (212) 225 1940



HALULU

Opened two years ago, this slightly out-of-the-way shop is the place for anyone who wants to transform their home into an eighteenth-century English country house. Stockists for Arthur Brett & Son of Norwich, England, one of the most successful firms specialising in reproduction Georgian furniture, Halulu can supply whole dining-room sets – chairs, table and sideboard – from £7,000, and break-front bookcases and elegant Pembroke side tables. Delivery takes about four months. The proprietor Selçuk Halulu also stocks Coles of London's superb-quality hand-printed wallpapers in a wide range of designs including gothic, neoclassical and trelliswork patterns; fabrics and a variety of trimmings, braids and tassels from Henry Newbery of London; and an assortment of handsome Wilton carpets by Hugh Mackay of Scotland. Hüsrev Gerede Caddesi 35 Teşvikiye, Istanbul Tel (212) 236 0599 Fax (212) 236 1042

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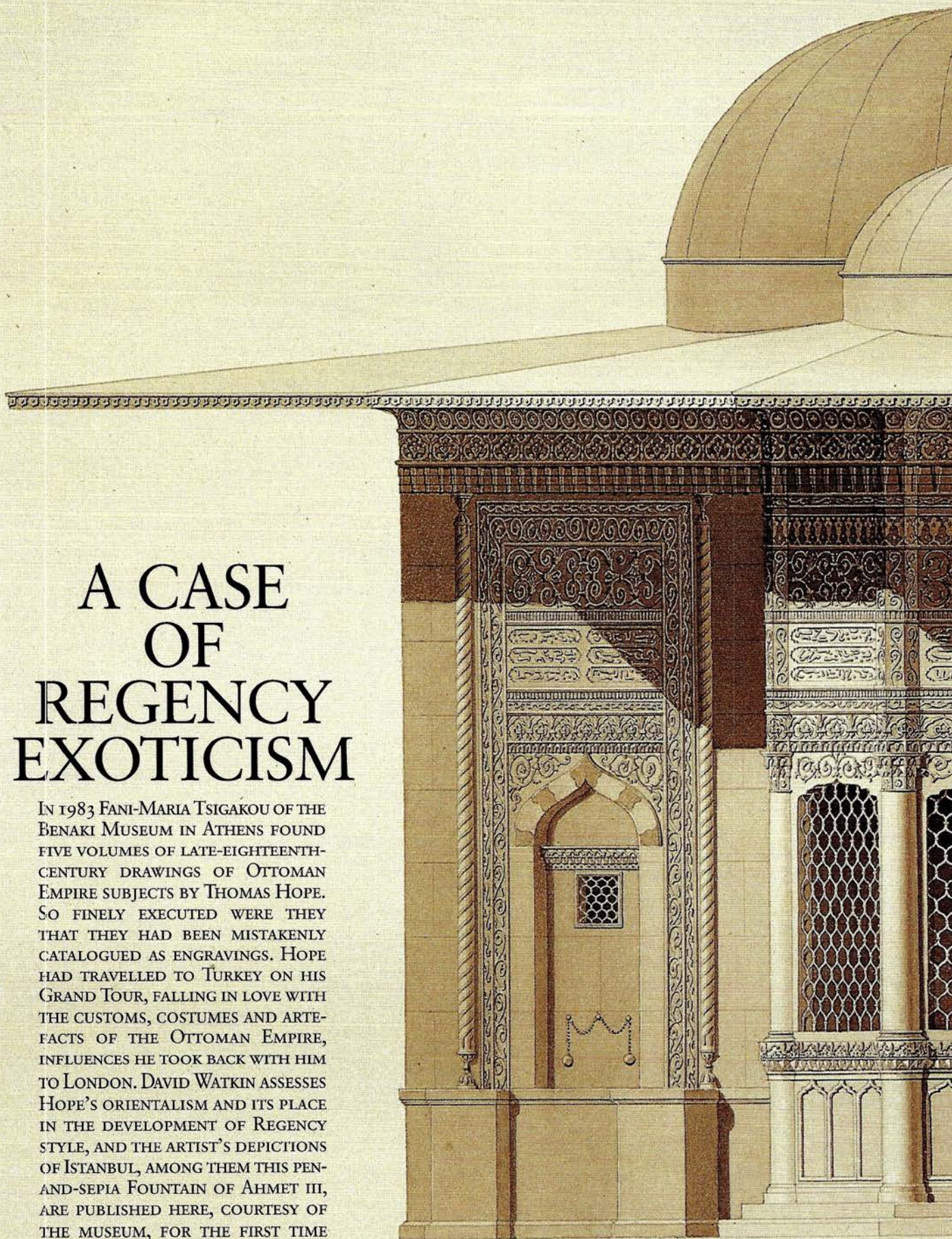
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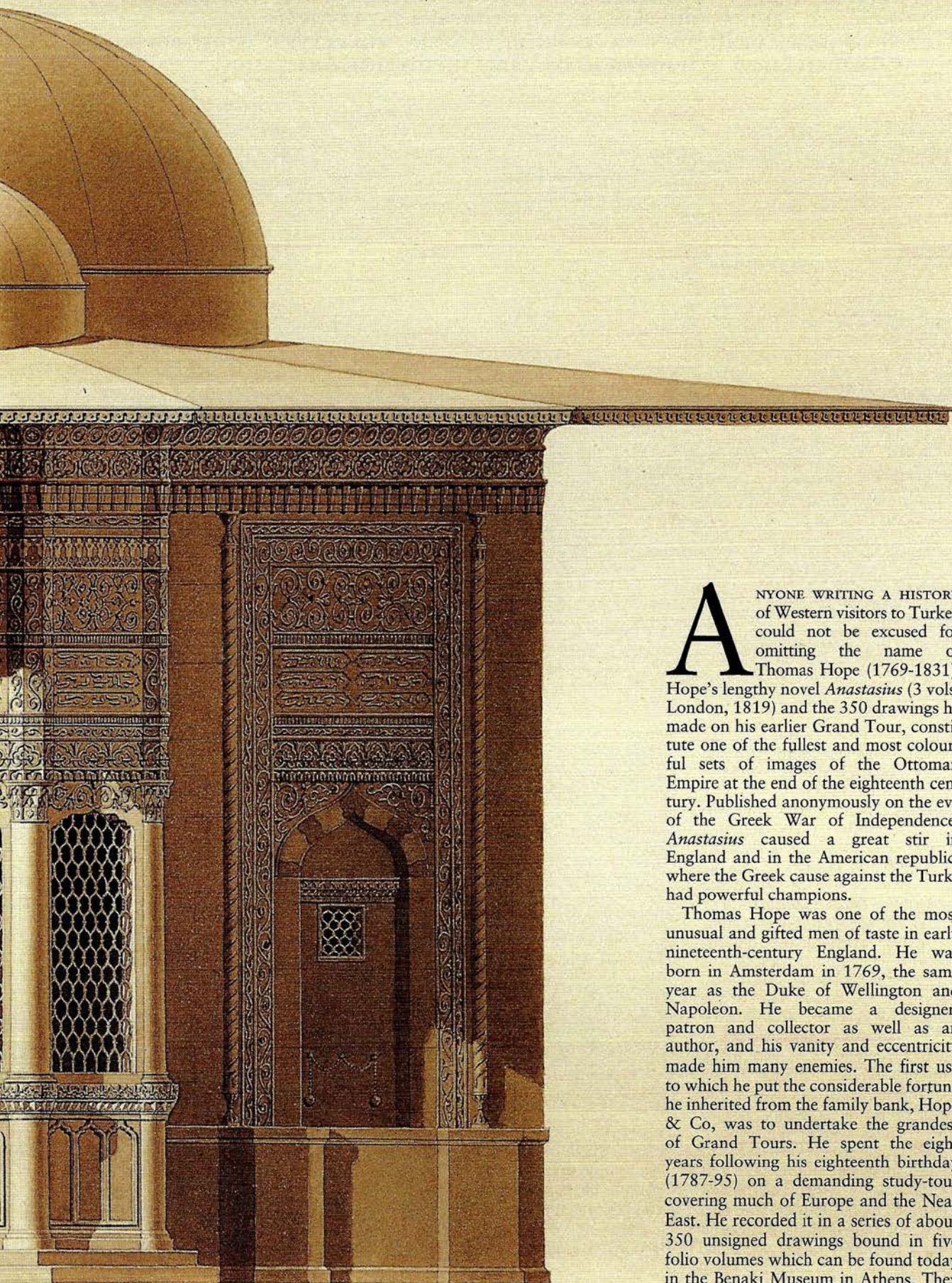


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A CASE OF REGENCY EXOTICISM

IN 1983 FANI-MARIA TSIGAKOU OF THE BENAKI MUSEUM IN ATHENS FOUND FIVE VOLUMES OF LATE-EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY DRAWINGS OF OTTOMAN EMPIRE SUBJECTS BY THOMAS HOPE. SO FINELY EXECUTED WERE THEY THAT THEY HAD BEEN MISTAKENLY CATALOGUED AS ENGRAVINGS. HOPE HAD TRAVELLED TO TURKEY ON HIS GRAND TOUR, FALLING IN LOVE WITH THE CUSTOMS, COSTUMES AND ARTEFACTS OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE, INFLUENCES HE TOOK BACK WITH HIM TO LONDON. DAVID WATKIN ASSESSES HOPE'S ORIENTALISM AND ITS PLACE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF REGENCY STYLE, AND THE ARTIST'S DEPICTIONS OF ISTANBUL, AMONG THEM THIS PEN-AND-SEPIA FOUNTAIN OF AHMET III, ARE PUBLISHED HERE, COURTESY OF THE MUSEUM, FOR THE FIRST TIME





ANYONE WRITING A HISTORY of Western visitors to Turkey could not be excused for omitting the name of Thomas Hope (1769-1831). Hope's lengthy novel *Anastasius* (3 vols, London, 1819) and the 350 drawings he made on his earlier Grand Tour, constitute one of the fullest and most colourful sets of images of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the eighteenth century. Published anonymously on the eve of the Greek War of Independence, *Anastasius* caused a great stir in England and in the American republic, where the Greek cause against the Turks had powerful champions.

Thomas Hope was one of the most unusual and gifted men of taste in early nineteenth-century England. He was born in Amsterdam in 1769, the same year as the Duke of Wellington and Napoleon. He became a designer, patron and collector as well as an author, and his vanity and eccentricity made him many enemies. The first use to which he put the considerable fortune he inherited from the family bank, Hope & Co, was to undertake the grandest of Grand Tours. He spent the eight years following his eighteenth birthday (1787-95) on a demanding study-tour covering much of Europe and the Near East. He recorded it in a series of about 350 unsigned drawings bound in five folio volumes which can be found today in the Benaki Museum in Athens. They

‘I RESIDED NEARLY A TWELVE MONTH IN CONSTANTINOPLE; VISITED THE ARSENAL AND BAGNIO FREQUENTLY; WITNESSED THE FESTIVAL OF ST GEORGE; SAW RHODES, WAS IN EGYPT, IN SYRIA, AND IN EVERY OTHER PLACE WHICH I HAVE ATTEMPTED TO DESCRIBE MINUTELY IN ANASTASIUS...’



ALL DRAWINGS BY COURTESY OF THE BENAKI MUSEUM, ATHENS

represent a unique record of the architecture, ornament, landscape and costume in Hungary and the Balkans, Turkey, Greece and Egypt.

Another fruit of his Grand Tour was *Anastasius*, which was subtitled *Memoirs of a Greek: written at the close of the eighteenth century*. Here he painted a vivid picture of life in the Ottoman Empire when it appeared to be on the verge of collapse. (Some regions were virtually autonomous, notably much of Albania and north-west Greece under the rule of Ali Pasha, who figures prominently in the novel.) One of the most impressive features of *Anastasius* is Hope's awareness of the key role of religion in the world he is describing. The Ottoman Empire included Turks, Greeks, Arabs, Armenians, Kurds and Jews; but its power structure was so fluid that anyone, regardless of origin, could rise within it, provided he was prepared to adopt the Muslim faith – as Hope's *Anastasius* does. The biggest dividing point in the Empire was thus not racial but the religious distinction between Christians and Muslims.



BY COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, LONDON

THOMAS HOPE BY SIR WILLIAM BEECHHEY, COMMISSIONED ON HOPE'S RETURN FROM THE EAST, EXHIBITED AT THE RA, 1799.

ABOVE: HOPE'S ELEGANT STUDIES IN WATERCOLOUR AND SEPIA OF THE GOLDEN HORN AT EYÜP, 40 X 60 CM, AND OPPOSITE, A TURKISH HOUSE, 20 X 29 CM

Despite this, the Greek Orthodox patriarch in Istanbul was both the leader of the Greek Orthodox community and also a high official in the Ottoman Empire, and there was a large Greek mercantile class which in some areas enjoyed a virtual monopoly of foreign trade and shipping.

Hope was well qualified to write a descriptive account of life, manners, politics and architecture in the old Ottoman Empire. As he explained in a letter of 1821, "I resided nearly a twelve month in Constantinople; visited the arsenal and bagnio frequently; witnessed the festival of St George; saw Rhodes, was in Egypt, in Syria, and in every other place which I have attempted to describe minutely in *Anastasius*...and had at one time an Albanian in my service." In the preface to the second edition of *Anastasius* in 1820, he was equally clear that the primary purpose of the novel was to provide the public with the information about oriental places and customs that he had acquired. He explained that he had published it with "the desire of



Room in a Turkish palace.

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adding my mite to the information so eagerly sought at this moment respecting the ever interesting regions once adorned by the Greeks", describing the novel's plot as nothing but a "fictitious superstructure".

Anastasius is a typical picaresque novel, an episodic narrative about a romantic scoundrel at odds with society. The son of a Greek Christian dragoman (interpreter) to the French consul on the island of Chios, Anastasius runs away to sea as a boy after an affair with the consul's young daughter. Arriving in Constantinople (Istanbul), he puts himself in the hands of a dubious Jewish physician, with whom he is imprisoned. He later conducts an affair with a married woman, whose husband's wrath he escapes by fleeing to a mosque and adopting the Muslim faith (a move he has long considered) and Turkish dress.

As a fully-fledged Muslim, Anastasius now travels to Cairo, where, entering the service of Süleyman Bey, whose daughter he marries, he achieves fame among the Mamelukes. In his brief but

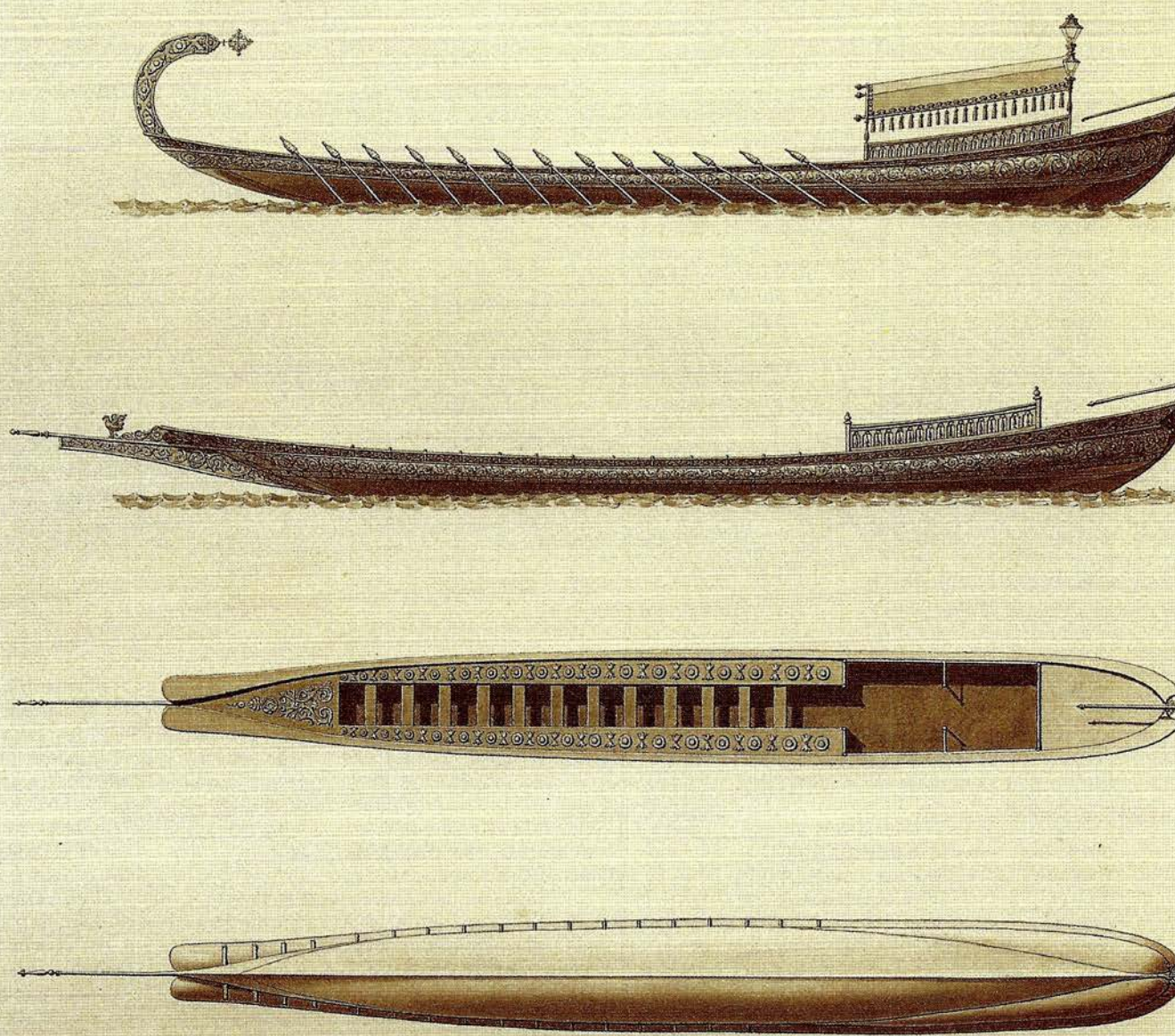
colourful career he also finds time to fight rebels in Albania, make a pilgrimage to Mecca, join a Bedouin sect, visit Alexandria, Malta, Sicily, Naples and Rome, marry three times and have two mistresses and two illegitimate children. Having exhausted himself and, it must be confessed, the reader, he dies at the end of the novel aged only thirty-five.

"Byronic" is the description that comes to mind for the hero of this poetic novel which many initially attributed to Lord Byron himself. Moreover, as Lady Blessington recorded, "Byron spoke today in terms of high commendation of Hope's *Anastasius*. He said that he wept bitterly over many pages of it, and for two reasons – the first, that he had not written it, and secondly that Hope *had* written it...a book, as he said, excelling all recent productions as well in wit and talent as in true pathos. He added that he would have given his two most approved poems to have been the author of *Anastasius*."

Anastasius is full of admiring descriptions of exotic clothes. For Hope's hero,

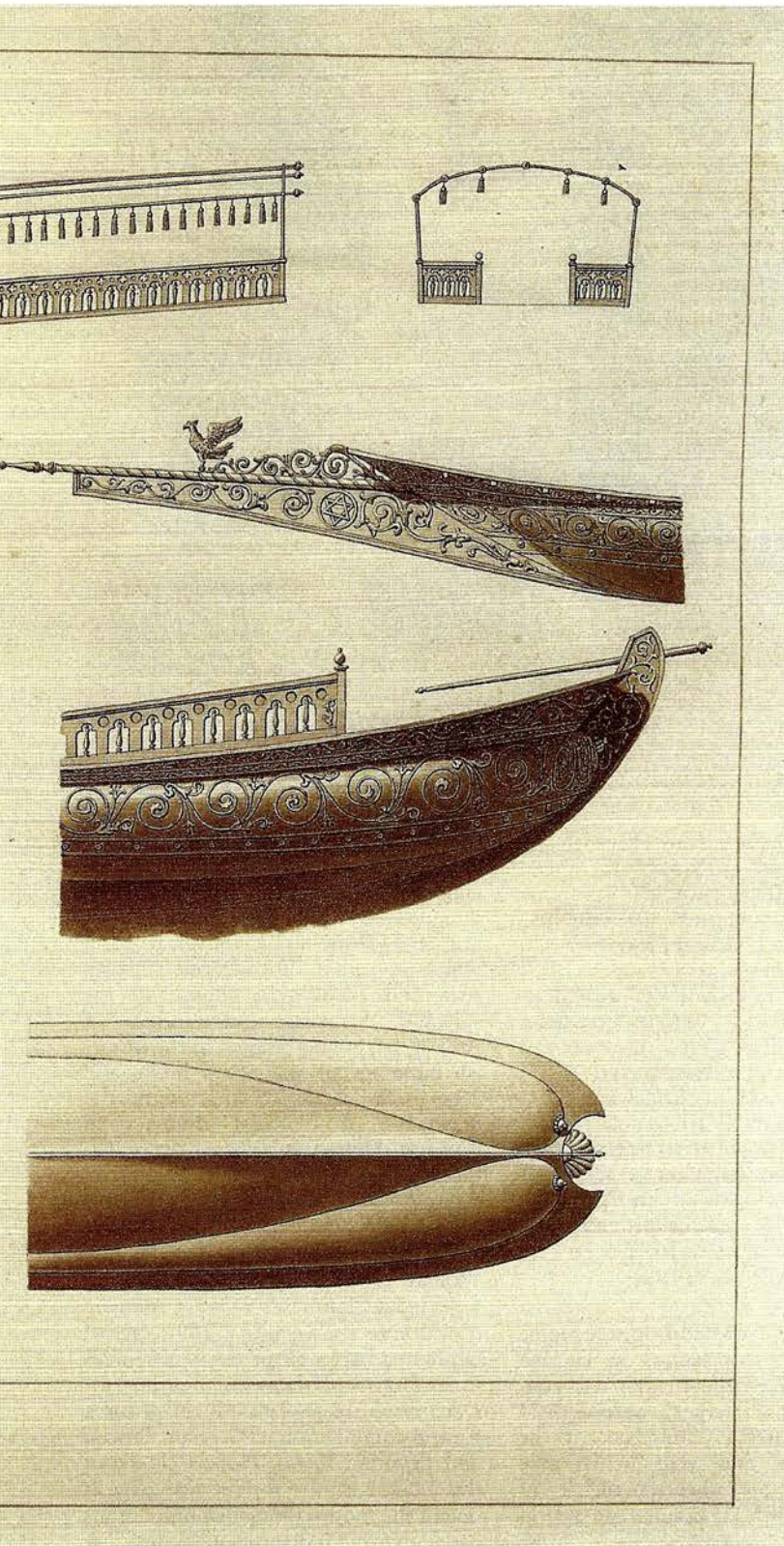
clothes play a role akin to drugs as a stimulus to transports of visionary bliss. Here he describes his own set of clothes: "the vest of purple broad cloth, the velvet jacket of emerald green, the scarlet *bermoos* [cloak] lined with sky blue satin, and the ample trousers of a blushing lilac, like the tints that surround the setting sun blended together in a universal galaxy, through dint of the embossed gold, that covered all its prominent parts as with a network...My dress resembled the infant leaves of the spring...After parading its beauties all day like a peacock in the country, I was only going home to display them all the evening, as on a new stage, in the illuminated coffee-houses in the town."

Hope's *Costume of the Ancients* (2 vols, London, 1809) is an important study of the dress, furniture and fittings of the ancient world, while his *Designs of Modern Costume* (1812) is an attempt to reform modern dress along classical lines. Like Byron, both Hope and his outrageous hero Anastasius adopted the colourful costume of the



Turkish Boats

'PERSIAN CARPETS COVERED THE FLOORS, GENOA VELVETS CLOTHED THE WALLS,
AND GILT TRELLICE-WORK OVERCAST THE LOFTY CEILINGS. CLOUDS OF RICH PERFUMES
ROSE ON ALL SIDES FROM SILVER CENSERS.'
THE MODEL FOR HOPE'S BLUE DRAWING ROOM IN DUCHESS STREET, LONDON



TURKISH
BOATS AND
CAIQUES
WERE ONE
OF THE
SOURCES OF
HOPE'S
DECORATIVE
LANGUAGE.
TODAY
EXQUISITE
EXAMPLES
ARE SEEN IN
ISTANBUL'S
NAVAL
MUSEUM

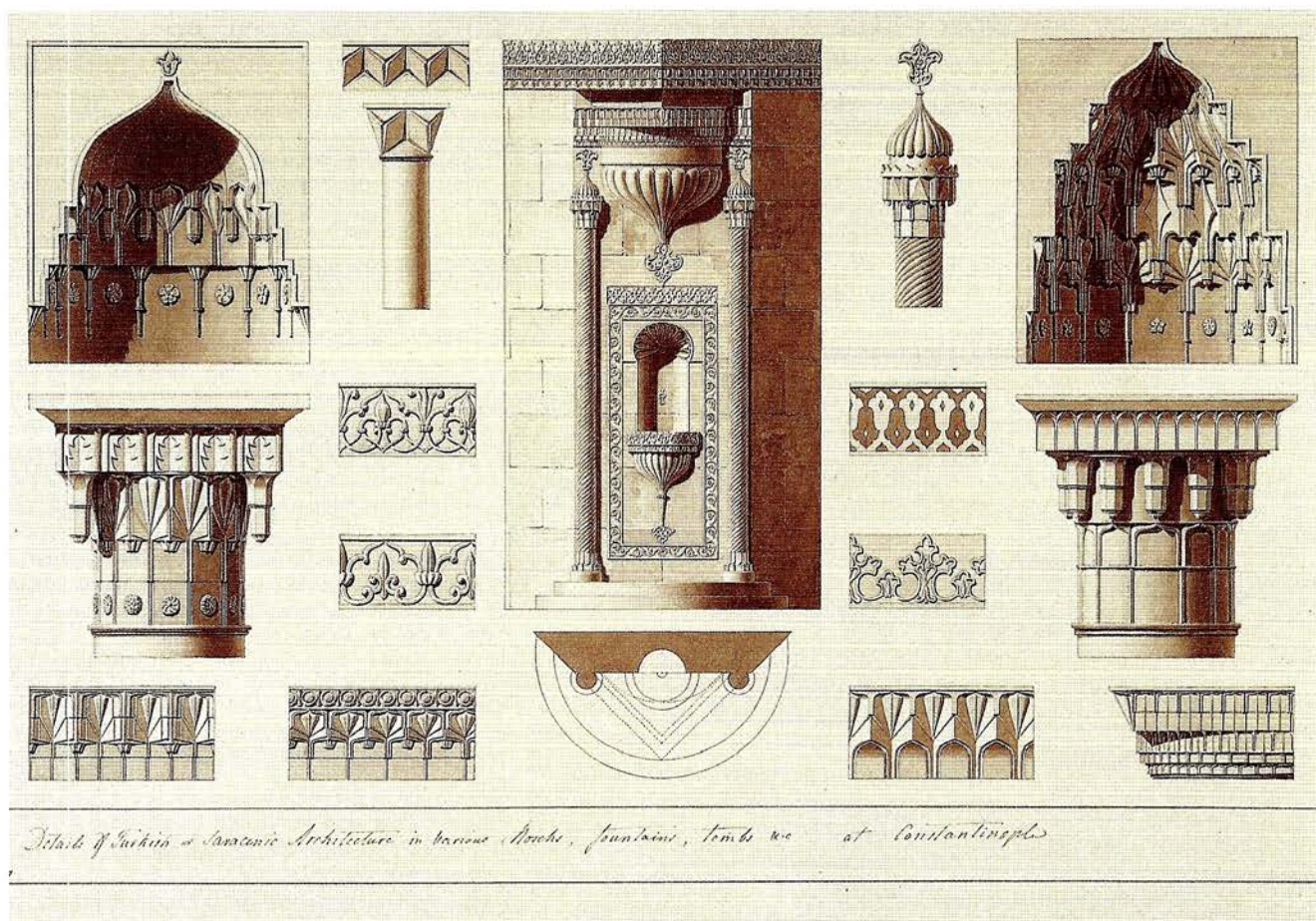
Ottoman Empire. In 1798, after he returned from his Grand Tour, Hope commissioned a flamboyant full-length portrait of himself standing in front of a mosque in Turkish dress, from the artist Sir William Beechey. (Byron followed his example in 1814 by commissioning portraits of himself in Albanian costume.)

Beechey's portrait was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1799 and is on display today at the National Portrait Gallery in London. It was originally hung by Hope in the staircase hall of his celebrated London mansion in Duchess Street, off Portland Place, where it was a fitting introduction to a house which he remodelled around 1800 in an extraordinary range of styles, as a museum encapsulating the cultures of the various countries that he had visited on his Grand Tour.

The picture gallery at Duchess Street was a shrine to art, designed to resemble the interior of a Greek temple; an important collection of Greek vases was displayed in a suite of rooms containing the kind of columbaria in which the vases had originally been discovered; and the Blue, or Indian, Drawing Room was modelled on one in a Turkish palace described in *Anastasius*. This was in the house in Constantinople of the Greek Mavroyeni, which "contained rooms furnished in all the splendour of Eastern magnificence. Persian carpets covered the floors, Genoa velvets clothed the walls, and gilt trellice-work overcast the lofty ceilings. Clouds of rich perfumes rose on all sides from silver censers."

Hope's response to his own interiors, decorated in the "Saracenic or Moorish" taste, afforded an equally exotic experience, involving scent as well as colour. He described the ceiling of his Blue Drawing Room as resembling a "canopy of trellice-work, or reeds, tied together with ribbons. The border and compartments display foliage, flowers, peacock's feathers... Persian carpets cover the floor... the colours of this room, in compliance with the oriental taste, are everywhere very vivid... The tint of the sofa is deep crimson; that of the walls sky blue; and that of the ceiling pale yellow, intermixed with azure and with sea green. Ornaments of gold, in various shades, relieve and harmonise these colours. Round the room are incense urns, cassolettes,

HOPE'S CHEVRON ORNAMENT SEEMED A SYMBOL OF THE DISSOLUTION
OF THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN EAST AND WEST



Details of Turkish or Saracenic Architecture in various Mosques, Fountains, Tombs etc. at Constantinople

flower-baskets, and other vehicles of natural and artificial perfumes.”

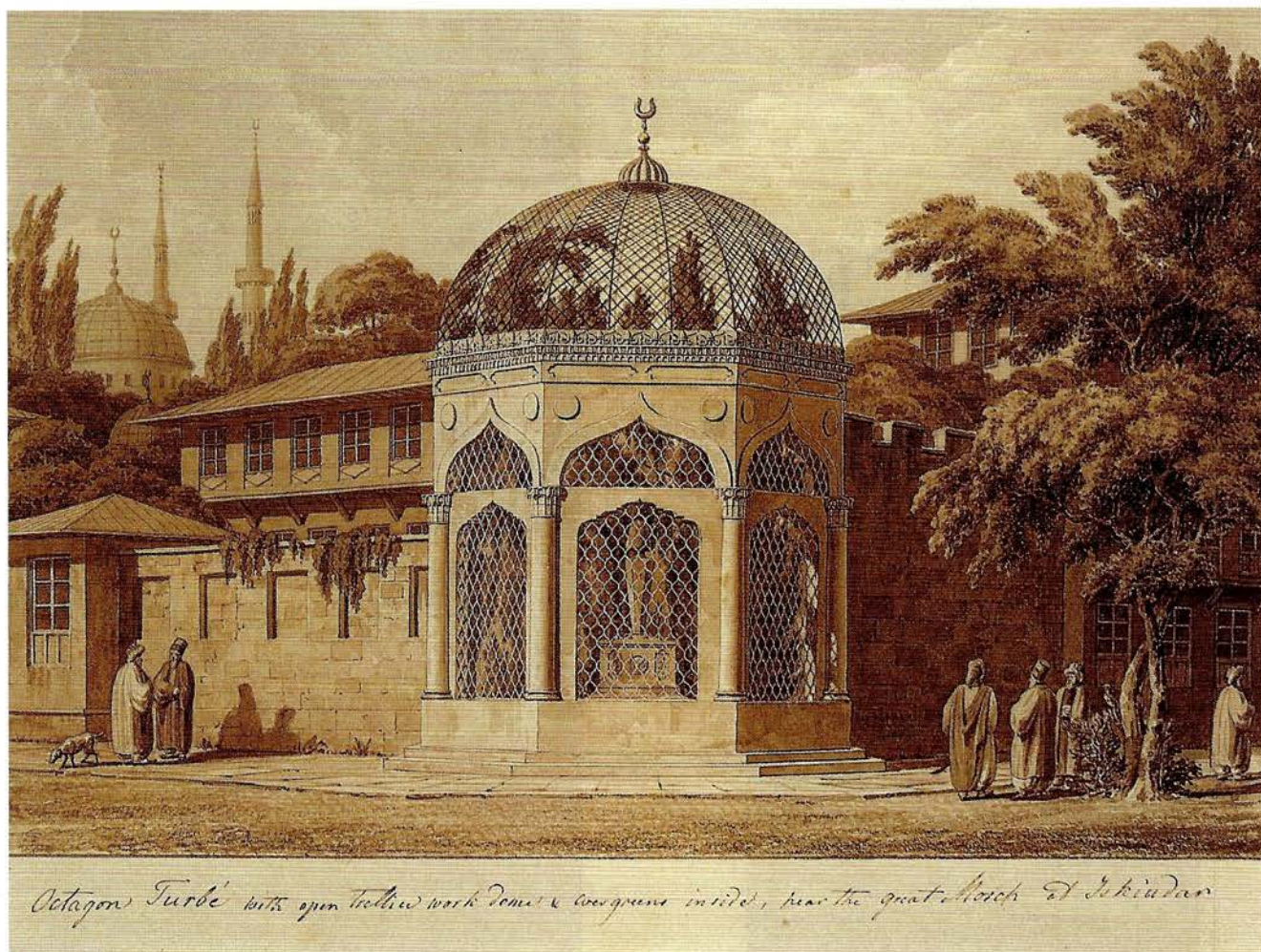
In such rooms Hope showed himself to be a key creator of the Regency style, anticipating John Nash's orientalised interiors of 1815–23 for the Prince Regent in the Royal Pavilion at Brighton. Hope specially commissioned the three large Indian pictures in the Blue Room from Thomas Daniell in 1799–1800. In order to suggest parity between Eastern and Western civilisations, these impressive topographical views were framed identically with a fourth painting by Panini of the Forum in Rome. Hope also designed the set of bizarre pendant wall-lights painted in black and gold with Græco-Egyptian ornaments and incorporating shields of the Greek *pelta* form. These can be seen today in the Royal Pavilion.

Hope described and depicted his interiors at Duchess Street in his book *Household Furniture and Interior Decoration Executed from Designs by Thomas Hope* (London, 1807). Most curiously, the title page was framed by an elaborate Islamic border which, he

ABOVE: PEN DRAWINGS BY HOPE OF MOTIFS OBSERVED IN ISTANBUL, 40 X 60 CM. FACING PAGE: THE OCTAGONAL TÜRBE OF VALIDE GÜLNUS EMETULLAH IN ÜSKÜDAR, WATER-COLOUR AND SEPIA, 20 X 29 CM. AHMET III BUILT THIS TOMB, AND THE MOSQUE NEXT TO IT, FOR HIS MOTHER IN 1709–10. HOPE'S VIEW OF ISTANBUL, WITH ITS ATTENUATED FORMS, DECORATIVE SCROLLS AND APPRECIATION OF LIGHT, REFLECTS THE TASTE OF THE TIMES BOTH IN ISTANBUL AND IN EUROPE. THE PLAY OF WESTERN AND EASTERN THEMES IN THE TURKISH ROCOCO OF THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY TULIP PERIOD SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN HOPE'S IDEA OF PERFECTION

explained, was “copied from the frame of a picture, representing a Turkish personage”. He believed that its “congelations and stalactites” were derived from the “Grecian architects of the lower empire” and were “remarkable for the play, or rather the flicker, of light and shade”. He pointed out that in Istanbul this singular ornament adorns

the capitals, the entablatures, the niches and the gateways of “most of the Greek churches and Mohammedan mosques, designed by Grecian builders”. It attracted Hope as a universal form which appeared “throughout Europe, Asia and Africa... in almost all the splendid Saracenic monuments of Arabia, Egypt and Persia”, in the Moorish buildings of Spain and India, and even in the zigzag carvings round the doorways of Norman churches in England. Hope wanted to make a synthesis of all styles, and this chevron ornament seemed a symbol of the dissolution of the boundaries commonly supposed to exist between Eastern and Western cultures. This ambition may be indebted to Piranesi's *Diverse Maniere d'Adornare i Cammini* (1769), one of numerous books Hope cited as sources in his *Household Furniture and Interior Decoration*. Here, Piranesi called for a fruitful combination of Grecian, Tuscan and Egyptian forms. Hope's choice of this Islamic border for the title page is one of the most striking examples of his perceptive and individual mentality. ♦



THE REDISCOVERY OF THE HOPE DRAWINGS

In September and October 1930 there was an exchange of letters between Antonis Benakis, the founder of the Benaki Museum in Athens, and a British auction house in London by the name of B.T. Batsford, concerning "a collection of drawings by Thomas Hope". In his last letter, dated October 28, Benakis wrote: "Much as I am interested in this lot, I very much regret I cannot, for the time being at least, buy it."

David Watkin mentioned these volumes of drawings in his study *Thomas Hope and the Neo-Classical Idea*, published in 1968. They appeared, he recounts, in Christie's Deepdene Library Catalogue in 1917, as lots 395-397, but were withdrawn before the sale took place. "They next turned up in an undated Sale Catalogue (c.1930) of 100 Old Rare or Unique Illustrated Books, Collections of Original Drawings, Designs, Engravings, etc... offered for Sale by B.T. Batsford Ltd... they believe the volumes were sold

to the Chicago Art Museum. Enquiry and advertisement in Chicago and elsewhere in America has not so far resulted in the discovery of these drawings."

In 1977, during a reorganisation of the Benaki Museum's library, five folio-size volumes of about 350 unsigned drawings were discovered, bound in contemporary gilt-tooled Russia leather. Two are inscribed along the spine "DRAWINGS BY T. HOPE"; these, and a third volume, display the Hope family motto and arms embossed with gilt on both covers. The arms show an incomplete globe, around which a Latin inscription reads: "AT SPES NON FACTA". This is a play on words referring to the Hope (*spes*) family name. On examining the volumes we realised that their contents fully coincided with the description given in the Batsford sale catalogue mentioned by Watkin.

The subjects of the 350 drawings and watercolours range from peasant life in Hungary to Egyptian pyramids and Byzantine churches. Turkish subjects are scattered throughout the five volumes, representing an astonishing

variety: Islamic architecture and details of decoration in Istanbul, the great mosques, fortresses on the Bosphorus, state barges and the Sultan's pleasure-boats, interiors of the imperial palace and of private houses; costumes of the officials in the Sultan's court; turbans, headaddresses and details of everyday and military dress; panoramas of the city and the Golden Horn; and, on the coast of Asia Minor, the ruins of Ephesus and Lycia, aqueducts, tombs and sepulchral monuments, etc.

The drawings reveal Hope's talent for recreating the atmosphere of remote civilisations and places. They also testify to his superb draughtsmanship. His fine sense of composition is obvious in the views and landscapes, his costumes are remarkable for their authenticity, and his architectural subjects are rendered in great detail, combined with considerable skill in perspective.

The Thomas Hope collection, now in the Benaki Museum's Department of Prints and Drawings, constitutes a unique pictorial inventory of Turkey in the late 1700s. *Fani-Maria Tsigakou*

THE EMBASSIES OF ISTANBUL

PALACES OF DIPLOMACY



THE FORMER EMBASSIES OF OTTOMAN ISTANBUL, LIKE OPULENT COUNTRY HOUSES IN NATIONAL COSTUME, HAVE MORE OF A CONSULAR ROLE TODAY BUT THEIR VAST CHAMBERS STILL EVOKE THE DIPLOMATIC RITUALS OF THEIR NINETEENTH-CENTURY HEYDAY.

IN THE FIRST OF TWO ARTICLES PATRICIA DAUNT TRACES THE HISTORY OF THESE SPECTACULAR WINTER PALACES, AND FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG ASSEMBLES A UNIQUE PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF THE TREASURES THEY CONTAIN

ABOVE: PERA HOUSE, THE FORMER BRITISH EMBASSY, BUILT IN 1844-55 IN RENAISSANCE REVIVAL STYLE. AFTER A FIRE IN 1870, INFERIOR LIMESTONE ON THE FAÇADE WAS REPLACED.

RIGHT: POLISHING THE VAST PARQUET FLOOR OF THE BALLROOM







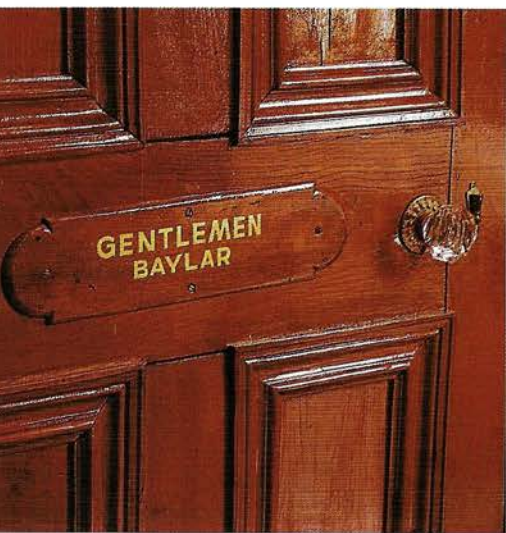
THE EMBASSIES MAY HAVE moved to Ankara, but the splendour of the best diplomatic bricks and mortar of the imperial age remains in the Istanbul quarter of Beyoğlu, the old Pera of cosmopolitan Constantinople. They are the grandest nineteenth-century diplomatic buildings of any of the imperial capitals and, with the exception of the Venetian palace, are

all more or less contemporary in date.

Trade with the Ottoman Empire, the *raison d'être* of the foreign community of Constantinople, brought diplomatic missions in its wake. At first the embassies were established within or near their traders' factories around the harbour of Galata, jostling the Genoese, Anconite, Ragusan, Pisan and Florentine merchants and at the mercy of Hebrew money-lenders, Armenian dragomans

The British Embassy

DESIGNED BY THOMAS SMITH FOR QUEEN VICTORIA'S AMBASSADOR LORD STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE, PERA HOUSE IS REMINISCENT OF CHARLES BARRY'S REFORM AND TRAVELLERS' CLUBS IN LONDON'S PALL MALL. ABOVE AND CENTRE RIGHT: MARBLE STAIRS LEAD FROM THE PALM COURT (FAR RIGHT) TO THE FIRST-FLOOR



STATEROOMS. LORD STRATFORD OBJECTED TO THE COURTYARD'S GLAZED ROOF AS "EXPENSIVE AND INCONVENIENT". TOP: A RELIEF OF QUEEN VICTORIA ADORNS A MARBLE MANTELPIECE IN THE BALLROOM ANTEROOM. BOTTOM: THE CLUBBY VICTORIAN STYLE OF A FOUR-PANELLED DOOR OF CONVENIENCE



(interpreters) and Greek jacks-of-all-trades. But the constant danger of fire, the risk of bubonic plague and the discomfort of overcrowding led them to follow the richer Franks away from the port into a garden suburb, Les Vignes de Péra, the site of present-day Beyoğlu.

Venice had been represented since 1082 by a succession of *bailios*, envoys nominated by the doge. The first Russian emissary arrived at the Porte in 1492.

France's first resident ambassador arrived in Istanbul in 1535, and a treaty full of substantial privileges was signed in 1536. The French alliance with Turkey arose from expediency. François I would have allied with the Devil if the latter had fought against the Emperor Charles V; he found the Great Turk a reliable substitute.

The English, then indisposed to form a trading company in seas infested with African pirates, contented themselves





The French Embassy

AFTER THE FIRE OF 1831, THE PALAIS DE FRANCE WAS REBUILT IN 1839-47 BY PIERRE LAURECISQUE, WHOSE WIFE AND SON ARE BURIED IN THE CHURCH OVERLOOKING THE GARDEN. TODAY IT IS THE MOST SUMPTUOUSLY FURNISHED OF ALL THE DIPLOMATIC BUILDINGS IN ISTANBUL. TOP: THE MONOGRAM 'LP', FOR LOUIS PHILIPPE, CAN BE SEEN ON A PEDIMENT OF THE GARDEN FAÇADE. ABOVE: THE ART NOUVEAU IRONWORK OVER THE MAIN ENTRANCE WAS ADDED BETWEEN 1908 AND 1913. LEFT: THE SALON BOSPHORE IN THE AMBASSADOR'S PRIVATE SUITE WAS REDECORATED FOR PRESIDENT MITTERRAND'S OFFICIAL VISIT IN 1992. THE WALL HANGINGS AND CURTAINS, FROM LUNÉVILLE IN FRANCE, ARE REDOLENT OF MOGUL FABRICS. BETWEEN THE WINDOWS IS A MID-NINETEENTH-CENTURY CABRIOLE-LEGGED MARQUETRY CABINET, ON WHICH STAND TWO BLUE-AND-WHITE CHINESE JARS. THE PORCELAIN FIGURE OF VENUS TO THE RIGHT, FROM A NINETEENTH-CENTURY ORIGINAL BY J.B. PIGALLE, IS FROM SÈVRES. THE CARPET ON THE WOOD-BLOCK FLOOR IS PERSIAN

with trading their wool and cloth for rhubarb and "trash berries" (currants) under the French flag. During the 1570s, Queen Elizabeth I decided on an embassy, but the English overtures were vigorously opposed by both France and Venice, by now the favoured claimants of Ottoman privilege and Levantine commerce, and characteristically averse to competition. The English none the less received their first official "Capitulations" in 1578.

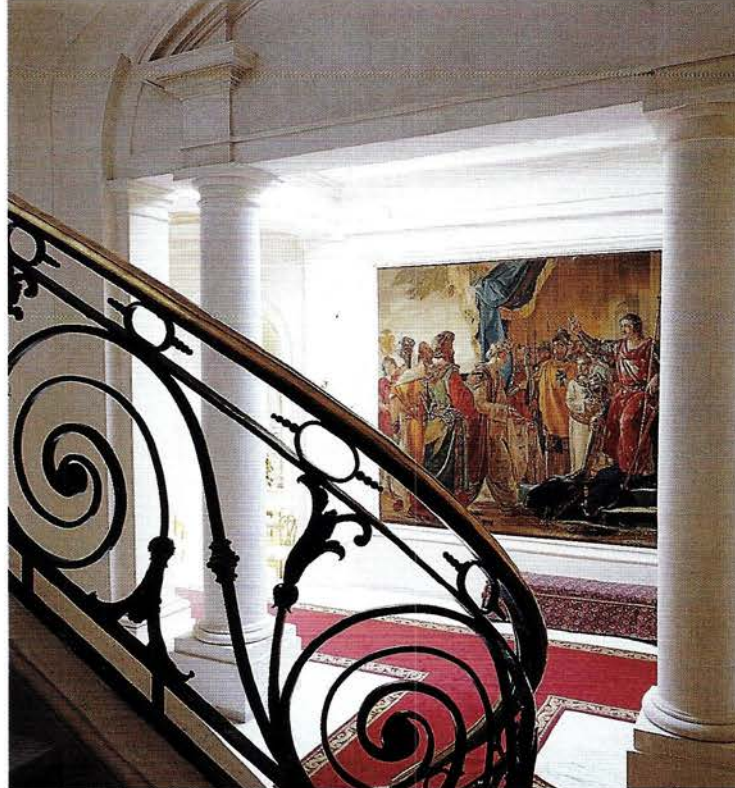
Sweden was no stranger to the Levant, having made use of the Russian rivers to trade with the Byzantines as early as 860. In 1631 the Swedes combined with the Dutch, who had received their first Capitulations in 1612, to conclude a treaty of friendship, not only to promote trade but also to cooperate with the Ottomans against the enemy emperors in Vienna and St Petersburg.

From the harbour at Galata, a steep rise flattened into an avenue leading to Pera. Known as La Grand' Rue, it ran along the spine of the hill, commanding magnificent views of both the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus. At its most elevated point, near Galatasaray, it was called the Heights of Pera. Tucked into the folds of the vine-clad hills running east to the Bosphorus, modest wood and plaster villas clung to the steep slopes.

By 1517 the Venetian *bailo* was renting such a villa – paper-thin and impossibly cold, or so he complained. The French in 1581 acquired the estate next door, enjoying the same idyllic view overlooking the Seraglio to the islands in the Sea of Marmara beyond. The English soon followed, taking a "faire house within a large field and pleasant gardens compassed with a wall" near the Venetians and French. Though this rented house nearly burned down twice, they would stay here until 1801, when the Sultan gave them a piece of land on the Heights of Pera in thanks for the part they played in the expulsion of the French from Egypt. The Dutch established themselves on Tophane Hill, near the palace of Galatasaray, probably on the same site they occupy to this day.

Diplomatic life in seventeenth-century Pera was conducted in some style. And it was expensive. The first Dutch ambassador housed a staff of twenty-one, among them a steward, a clerk, a messenger, a tailor, a cellar-master/butler, a doorkeeper, an under-cook, a stableman, two valets, three dragomans, an apprentice dragoman, an apothecary, a painter, a Turkish scribe and, finally, two janissary guards allotted by the Sublime Porte at the ambassador's expense.

Rivalries among the foreigners were intense. The Catholic Latins generally



considered the Protestant northerners of no consequence. The Frenchman became apoplectic at the thought that an Englishman might be given precedence, and the Venetian threatened war when a Dutchman entered a door before him.

The sedan chair was introduced by an English ambassador in 1674. It was initially frowned upon by the Turks, the grand vizier threatening to "break that cage" on the ambassador's head. Once

TOP LEFT: THE NEOCLASSICAL BALLROOM OF THE PALAIS DE FRANCE. TOP RIGHT: THE STAIRCASE HALL, HUNG WITH TAPESTRIES WOVEN IN THE FAMED GOBELIN WORKSHOPS. BOTTOM LEFT: THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR'S BATHROOM. BOTTOM RIGHT: THE DINING ROOM, WHICH LEADS OUT TO THE GARDEN.

OPPOSITE: THE GARDEN; THE EMBASSY IS TO THE RIGHT, AND IN THE FOREGROUND IS THE CHURCH OF ST LOUIS DES FRANÇAIS

adopted, however, it lingered on in Turkey long after it had disappeared elsewhere. As late as 1875 it was still in common use.

The finest eighteenth-century embassy was that of the Swedes, which stood on La Grand' Rue and was completed, some say, with monies sent to Istanbul by the Protestant faithful, paid for by their Sunday church offerings for the buying and freeing of slaves. During the



mid-eighteenth century the Russians also acquired a piece of land on La Grand' Rue. It is said that a shipload of sacred Russian earth was brought in at the command of Catherine the Great so that her embassy "should stand on Russian soil". The first embassy was wooden and burned down in 1767. It was the general belief of Turks and foreigners alike that fires such as this, which were frequent, were spread by red-hot nails catapulted

with explosive force over great distances from burning timbers.

The palace of the Venetian *bailos*, now the Italian ambassador's Istanbul residence, was transformed in the 1750s from a wooden structure into the fine brick and stone palace we know today. But it did not satisfy the *bailo* Andrea Memmo; in the late 1770s he found the place both "insufficiently spaced" and "unhealthily tucked into the hill". He

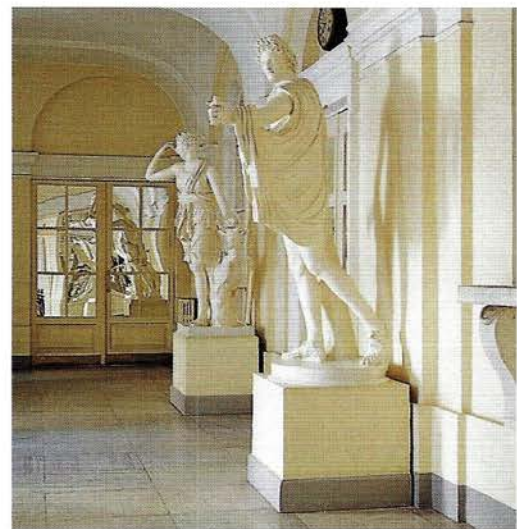
wanted to sell it to the Armenian patriarch and build a new and even grander palace. The Senate would have none of it, but it did find the funds for a major refurbishment.

With the end of the Venetian Republic in 1797, the great palace of the *bailos* passed from hand to hand with the ebb and flow of European military fortunes. The French and the Austrians each in turn won and lost it. It was sumptuously

The Russian Embassy



BUILT BETWEEN 1837 AND 1845 BY THE YOUNG SWISS ARCHITECT GIUSEPPE FOSSATI USING RUSSIAN CRAFTSMEN, THIS IS THE MOST IMPOSING OF ALL THE EMBASSIES FROM THE SEA. AN EARTHQUAKE IN 1894 AND A VIOLENT GALE IN 1905 NECESSITATED SUBSTANTIAL RESTORATION WORK. OPPOSITE: THE EMBASSY'S PALM-FRINGED NEOCLASSICAL ENTRANCE FAÇADE. THE GRAND BALLROOM (LEFT) LEADS INTO A VAST LOGGIA (RIGHT) PROVIDING SWEEPING VIEWS OF THE BOSPHORUS THROUGH DECORATIVE WINDOWS. BELOW: THE RICHLY ORNAMENTED CEILING OF THE ANTEROOM NEXT DOOR (BELOW RIGHT) INCLUDES VIEWS OF ST PETERSBURG BASED ON LATE-EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY AND EARLY-NINETEENTH-CENTURY PRINTS. CENTRE RIGHT: GODLY STATUES IN THE HALL





YERİNDEN KALAN
MÜHÜR KİTAPÇIĞI
MÜHÜR KİTAPÇIĞI

refurbished by Baron Karl von Bruck during his term as Austrian ambassador. When he inaugurated the newly renovated rooms by holding a splendid ball during the night of February 6, 1854, "full-grown orange and lemon trees lined the walls of every room". The scent of the blossom and the sight of the fruit enchanted the people of Pera, who "after the departure of the Sultan, danced until six in the morning", congratulating their host "that the sherbet never ran out".

A series of fires at the beginning of the nineteenth century left Pera in ruins. "More than thirty-eight outbreaks in less than two months of the new Vizier's administration," wrote the Swedish minister Palin the day after Sweden's embassy burned down during the night of March 25, 1818. It was a devastating blaze which left only the foundations of the building, the mutilated walls of the stables, laundry and outbuildings and, alone and untouched, a garden kiosk in which the minister and his family sheltered. Though the archives and his famous collection of antiquities were safe in one of the fireproof magazines, everything else that the Palins possessed was lost, including his completed memoirs. "Whatever the shock," he wrote, "the view from the garden heals the spirits and for a moment numbs the senses into forgetting the reality of the ruin and desolation around."

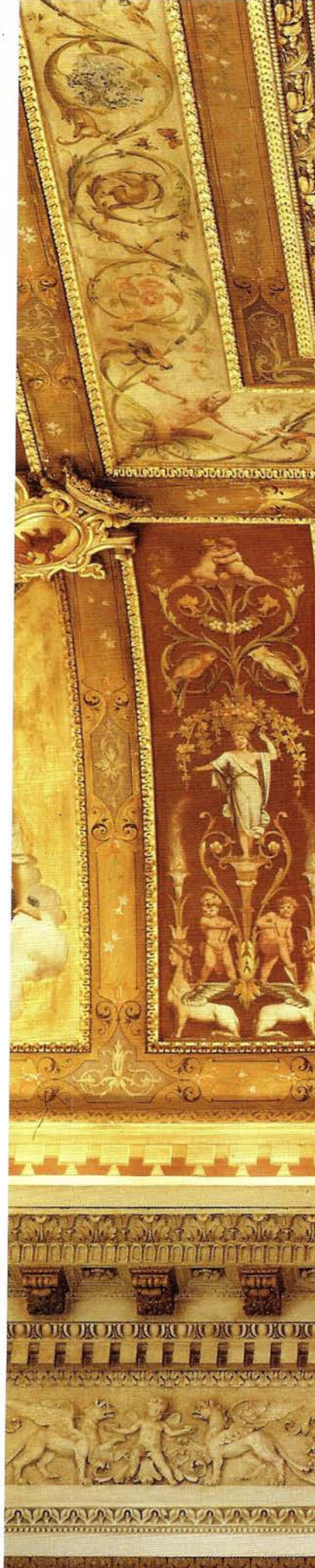
A severe earthquake set the bells of Pera tolling a week before a catastrophic fire which engulfed the Russian embassy "in an amphitheatre of flames". Then, during the morning of August 22, 1831, the worst of all the fires to ravage Pera destroyed the Dutch, British and French embassies but miraculously missed the Venetian. The flames reached its gates but a freak lull in the wind, followed by a particularly fierce blast, lifted them over the roof to continue down the hillside, leaving havoc in their wake. It was said that more than a thousand houses were destroyed in six hours, and the heat was so intense that even fireproof magazines were melted.

Only in 1837 did work on a new Russian embassy begin. Plans for an imposing neoclassical palace were prepared by a young Swiss architect, Giuseppe Fossati, who had won his spurs in St Petersburg with his design for the Chamber of Nobility. The best Russian craftsmen were brought in; the iron gates, imperial arms and window grilles were specially cast at the famous Russian ironworks at Lugansk, and a team of Italian artists was commissioned to paint the ceilings and walls. A palace of no uncertain grandeur rose from the ashes of its wooden predecessors; the height of the



The American Embassy

THE PALAZZO CORPI (ABOVE) WAS ORIGINALLY BUILT, BETWEEN 1873 AND 1882, FOR IGNAZIO CORPI, A WEALTHY GENOESE SHIPOWNER; HE DIED ON ITS COMPLETION, REPUTEDLY IN THE ARMS OF HIS MISTRESS. THE BUILDING WAS BOUGHT FOR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IN 1907 BY THE AMBASSADOR JOHN G.A. LEISHMAN. IT WAS THE FIRST DIPLOMATIC PROPERTY TO BE OWNED BY THE UNITED STATES IN EUROPE. BELOW: AN ETCHED WINDOW DIVIDES THE STAIRS FROM THE UPPER HALL. BOTTOM: A CLASSICAL FIGURE HOLDS A NEWEL LIGHT ON THE STAIRCASE. ALL THE MATERIALS FOR THE PALAZZO'S CONSTRUCTION WERE IMPORTED FROM ITALY. RIGHT: THE ROMAN GOD NEPTUNE FEATURES IN THIS DRAMATIC FRESCO ON THE LOWER HALL CEILING







The Venetian Palace

THE PALAZZO DI VENEZIA (ABOVE), NOW THE RESIDENCE OF THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR, WAS REBUILT IN THE 1750S, AND WITH THE DEMISE OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC BECAME A DIPLOMATIC BASE FOR FRANCE, AUSTRIA AND THEN ITALY. IT SURVIVED THE 1831 FIRE THAT RAVAGED THE DUTCH, BRITISH AND FRENCH EMBASSIES. ABOVE RIGHT: A SEDAN CHAIR IN THE HALL. RIGHT: SPACE FOR AMBASSADORIAL RELAXATION. BELOW: FRESHLY PAINTED SHUTTERS LEFT TO DRY IN THE GARDEN LOGGIA



ceiling in the columned ballroom was thirteen metres, with the adjacent loggia commodious enough to receive all Pera in comfort.

A year after the great fire of 1831, the French minister of foreign affairs wrote to his new ambassador, Admiral Roussin, of the advantage of a stay in Constantinople, emphasising the pleasure of living in a palace as agreeable as the Palais de France. Admiral Roussin's problem on arrival was how it should be rebuilt: on a new site away from the city? In stone or in wood? He invited the archaeologist Charles Texier, in Istanbul for his first mission in Asia Minor, to draw up plans for a stone building resistant to fire. But the credits did not cover the cost of even a wooden edifice.

The Parisian architect Pierre Laurecisque produced designs for a charming and innovative building that would enable the ambassador to live, entertain and work under the same roof. He grossly underestimated the cost in order to win the contract. The French writer Gérard de Nerval, passing through in 1843, noted that the palace was "costing millions of francs" and that it was "not yet finished". Building had indeed halted, and the Maltese stonemasons who had been working the fire-resistant white stone had been laid off while funds were awaited.

Four years later the palace was standing on a raised terrace, on the levelled rubble of its predecessor. Its only decorations were the busts of François I and Henri IV above the west doorway, and the monogram "LP" traced onto the wings of the southern side of the house.

A magnificent stairway sweeps up to the ambassador's apartment on the second floor, which houses a fine collection of portraits of kings of France and sultans of Turkey, history paintings, firmans and rare furniture. The columned drawing room is hung with tapestries bearing the arms of France and Navarre, specially woven for the palace by the Gobelins workshops. The panelled ballroom is decorated with a Restoration carved frieze of alternating swans and musical instruments. Both "Empire blue" boudoirs are lined with Louis XVI furniture and porcelain from the factory at Sèvres. The dining room, giving onto a terrace overlooking the garden, is hung with tapestries based on cartoons by Lebrun. In the wonderful gardens there is still a chapel and the disused sixteenth-century prison, a reminder of the powers of the foreign representatives in Ottoman times.

"AE DES LEGATIONIS ANGLICANAE AEDIFICATAE VICTORIA REGANTE ANNO DOMINO MDCCCXLIV" is how the British

embassy, a “monument of lavish expenditure of public money combined with false economy”, proclaims itself along the top of its southern façade.

The violently Turcophile queen, who had to be reminded by her prime minister Benjamin Disraeli that he was not her grand vizier, never saw her palace at Constantinople. How gratified she would have been by her initials intertwined on the pillars in her drawing room, and her bust carved into the marble mantelpiece in her ballroom. In the race for palace rebuilding, Britain



finished last. After the fire the British ambassador was comfortable up the Bosphorus at Tarabya and shelved all plans to return to the squalor of “the dirty quarter of town”.

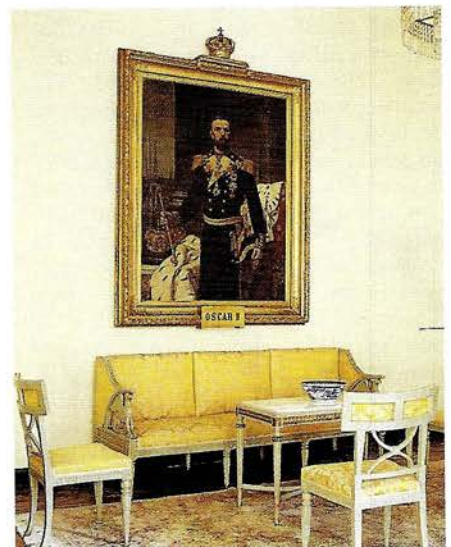
When the arrival of Sir Stratford Canning (“the Great Elchi”) as the new ambassador became imminent, a decision had to be made. Canning was no stranger to the old palace, which he remembered for the bats that were in the habit of hovering over the dining table – a disturbance during evening parties, their sooty wings and foul odour strongly suggestive of the Harpies. He had witnessed the “Auspicious Incident” – the dissolution of the Janissaries – from his seat at table commanding a view of Stamboul beyond the Golden Horn: “... I had scarcely taken my place when I observed columns of smoke rising above the opposite horizon. What could they mean? I asked, and the reply informed me that the Sultan’s people had fired on the barracks of the Janissaries...”

Only in July 1844 was it finally decided in London to begin building on the foundations of the old palace. Thomas Smith, a disciple of Sir Charles Barry’s Renaissance revival, designed a rectangular Anglo-Italian structure. An



The Swedish Embassy

THE PRESENT SWEDISH BUILDING (BELOW) WAS CONSTRUCTED IN 1870. THE ARCHITECT, PULGHER, CREATED A HOUSE WITH ROOMS RADIATING FROM A CENTRAL HALL. SWEDEN’S FINE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY EMBASSY WAS RAZED TO THE GROUND IN 1818, IN A CONFLAGRATION THAT ALSO DESTROYED THE MEMOIRS OF THE SWEDISH MINISTER PALIN. A GARDEN KIOSK, SPARED BY THE FLAMES, BECAME A TEMPORARY BASE. PALIN WAS CONSOLED BY THE SIGHT OF THE SEA: “THE VIEW FROM THE GARDEN HEALS THE SPIRITS AND FOR A MOMENT NUMBS THE SENSES INTO FORGETTING THE REALITY OF THE RUIN AND



DESOLATION AROUND.’ ABOVE LEFT: A MEDALLION ON THE STAIRCASE OF THE CURRENT BUILDING, FROM AN ORIGINAL BY THE ROYAL SCULPTOR JOHAN TOBIAS SERGEL. ABOVE: IN A ROOM NEXT TO THE DRAWING ROOM ON THE FIRST FLOOR IS A PORTRAIT OF THE SWEDISH KING OSCAR II. THE GUSTAVIAN FURNITURE, WITH GRIFINS ON THE SOFA ARMS (TOP), DATES FROM 1790–1810

important feature was a fine marble staircase. Alleys of trees would border the garden on three sides, secluding a southerly terrace; some of the mastic trees that had been brought from the Black Sea had survived the fire, but there would be new plantings of pines, Judas, magnolia, persimmon, chestnut, bay and *Acacia ibressera* (*gül ibrişim*). They remain to this day.

The most pressing problem was that the building of the Dolmabahçe Palace was by then under way on the shore of the Bosphorus and all the best quarries and workmen had been commandeered for it. The price of stone had doubled. A quarry was found, five hours' journey by horse westward from the city, but doubts were expressed about the durability of the fine limestone. It was difficult to get stone cut to the required size and presents had to be made to the Sultan's director of kilns in order to obtain lime. The foundations of the old embassy were found to be too soft and had to be dug to a depth of twenty feet and filled in with hard stone. Smith was asked by the Sultan's chief physician to make plans for a school of medicine. Permission was granted so long as it did not interfere with his embassy work, but the British authorities began to suspect that their architect was doing a thriving trade building for Turks while drawing his salary from the Office of Works.

By 1846 half the roof was in place, and by October 1848 the ambassador had moved in to occupy the second floor. The costs had escalated. The architect was in disgrace. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, as Canning had become, objected to the glazed iron roof planned to cover the central courtyard. He raged over the painting, papering and bell-hanging. Thomas Smith returned to London in the summer of 1853 and, even in the spring of 1855, by which time it had been under construction for over ten years, the embassy was not complete and the roof was leaking in sixty to seventy places. But on December 25, 1855, the Great Elchi's palace was ready enough for a Christmas Day ball. Florence Nightingale, much weakened from her recent illness, spent the evening on a sofa in the new and beautiful ballroom beside a blazing fireplace of carved marble. Lady Hornby found the palace "very beautiful, its spacious white stone corridors, richly and warmly carpeted... an air of perfectness was very striking".

The following year Sultan Abdülmecit attended a fancy-dress ball, escorted from Galata to the palace by a company of English Lancers, every man carrying a torch. Lord Stratford met him at the carriage door and, as he alighted, "a

communication by means of galvanic wires was made to the fleet, who saluted him with prolonged salvos of cannon". It was reported that the Sultan was gratified by this splendid ball, not least by the Highlanders and Lancers who lined the grand staircase, one on each step, and by the Light Dragoons and Royals who presented arms to him in the hall.

The search for the site of the first German embassy, behind the Dolmabahçe Palace and overlooking the Bosphorus, the Golden Horn and the Sea of Marmara, began in 1870, and building started in 1874. It was completed in three years. Hubert Gubbel's neo-Renaissance celebration of German might dominated this district of wooden structures. "The new palace impresses us more than it pleases our aesthetic senses... it is a mammoth lacking elegance, an unrelieved mass without archi-



AN EAGLE GUARDS THE GERMAN EMBASSY, BUILT IN THE 1870S IN THE NEW SUBURB OF AYAZPAŞA OVERLOOKING DOLMABAĞÇE PALACE

tectural worth and stands out in this blessed place like a sore thumb," wrote a contemporary Austrian correspondent. Today it is dwarfed by the new Park Hotel, but perhaps the Austrian's judgment was not far from the mark.

The palace was certainly splendid. Marble lined the walls of the principal reception rooms and was used for columns, stairways and balconies. Stucco bas-reliefs decorated walls and ceilings. Ornamental marble and marquetry floors complemented the wall and ceiling paintings. Gas lighting and air-propelled heating lit and warmed the great interiors. It was "just like something out of the Arabian Nights".

The establishment of the United States legation at the Porte came later, although American missionaries had been in the country since the 1830s and Robert College had been founded in 1863. It was not until the arrival in 1901

of John G. A. Leishman as minister of the legation that the present building was hired and later bought. It had been built by one of the "last opulent Franks to move up the hill", one Ignazio Corpi, a Genoese shipowner who had amassed a vast fortune since arriving in Turkey as a young man. It was a neoclassical monument to prosperity on the western slopes of the Heights of Pera. Its Italian architect, Giacomo Leoni, had imported all the building materials from Italy – marble for the floors and mantelpieces from Carrara, rosewood for the window frames and doors from Piemonte – and a team of Italian painters had been specially commissioned to cover the walls and ceilings, even those of the bathrooms, with frescoes of heroic and bacchanalian scenes.

It is said that a soothsayer had foretold that on completion of the palace its owner was to die. During the night of the inauguration of the palace in 1882, Ignazio Corpi did indeed expire, allegedly in the arms of a mistress, his cousin, a liaison which was considered incestuous. The house stood abandoned and was fought over by his heirs, who were undecided whether to lease or to sell. The United States government bought it in 1907. The story goes that Leishman, unable to persuade his government to buy what was to become their first state-owned embassy, arranged a game of poker between himself and those of the department concerned. If they won, Leishman bought it; if Leishman won, the government bought it. Leishman won. In 1937 the frescoes were covered with grey-green paint when the interior was painted throughout.

With the move of the embassies to Atatürk's new capital in the 1920s, the old palaces were neglected. Only when trade with Turkey revived in the 1980s was the decay reversed – a fitting development, since it was trade that had brought the foreign powers to the shores of the Bosphorus and financed the palaces in the nineteenth century.

Turkey's economic miracle has revived the Istanbul consulates. The Italians installed fourteen new marble bathrooms in 1989. The French carried out a major refurbishment ahead of Mitterrand's visit in 1992. The Germans are rumoured to have spent over two million dollars on the restoration of Kaiser Wilhelm II's palace to its original splendour. The Americans have started to peel off the grey-green paint, and Corpi's fabled frescoes are again seeing the light of day. The Russians, celebrating the five-hundredth anniversary of the first embassy, have already



restored the ceiling in Fossati's palace, which shows pre-revolutionary St Petersburg – a rare record of how the city looked in the nineteenth century. The British have spilled into the old stable block and have painted their ball-room *bayrak* red (the colour of the Turkish flag), perhaps in remembrance of the Great Elchi, who was persuaded to hand over his household linen to Florence Nightingale for the bandaging

The Embassy of the Netherlands

THE PRESENT DUTCH BUILDING WAS ERECTED IN 1850; THE ARCHITECT CHOSE TO REPLICATE A PARTICULAR STYLE OF COUNTRY HOUSE FROM THE PREVIOUS CENTURY. THE DUTCH WERE THE FIRST WESTERN NATION TO BE GIVEN LAND FOR AN EMBASSY IN THE VINEYARDS OF PERA

of the wounded from the Crimea.

Foreign flags fly in Ankara above utilitarian residences. In Istanbul, high walls shelter the consulates as hidden oases in the hustle and bustle of Beyoğlu, but the flags once again flutter proudly over the extravagant architecture and lush gardens relished so much in the past by envoys to the Sultan. ♦

NEXT ISSUE: PATRICIA DAUNT ON THE SUMMER EMBASSIES OF THE BOSPHORUS

BY HALI WRIT

RUG ENTHUSIASTS HAVE THEIR OWN UNIQUE BIBLE IN HALI MAGAZINE – NOT A STAID ACADEMIC JOURNAL BUT AN ACCESSIBLE AND EVEN IRREVERENT GUIDE TO THE GLOBAL ANTIQUE TEXTILE SCENE. MADELEINE MARSH UNRAVELS THE FORMULA OF A MAVERICK AMONG PERIODICALS, AND WE PRESENT EIGHT OF THE MOST OUTSTANDING TURKISH RUGS FROM ITS PAGES



HALI



The Black and White Rug of the 19th Century
Early Carpet with Floral Design
Reproduced 1992, Issue 40

One London carpet dealer recently gave me his own view of the world's most significant publications. "First there was the Bible, then there was the Koran, then there was *Hali* magazine," he told me, in all seriousness. While the first two titles need no introduction, the third is not quite so familiar. *Hali* is the international magazine of fine carpets and textiles. The leading academic and commercial journal in its field, it is essential reading for dealers, collectors, academics and anybody interested in untangling the complex strands and knots of worldwide carpet and textile history.

To the more general reader, the idea of a specialist rug magazine is not exactly an enticing prospect. Scholarly journals often have a reputation for being long on text, short on colour and low in circulation, and for containing articles in which new and valuable research is obscured by an unreadable style. You read them only because, like medicine, they are good for you. "Some of the specialist journals in my area are very technical," admits Jennifer Wearden, textile curator at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London.

MUSEUM OF ISLAMIC ART, BERLIN



FACING PAGE:
'DRAGON AND
PHOENIX' RUG,
ANATOLIA, FIRST
HALF 15TH
CENTURY,
90 X 172CM (HALI
ISSUE 69).
LEFT: PRAYER RUG
WITH APRICOT
FIELD, ANATOLIA,
16TH CENTURY,
137 X 224CM,
EXHIBITED AT THE
ORIENT STARS
EXHIBITION IN
HAMBURG, 1993.
THE ORIENT
STARS
COLLECTION,
FORMED BY
HEINRICH AND
WALTRAUT
KIRCHHEIM,
INCLUDES SOME
OF THE MOST
IMPORTANT EARLY
TURKISH RUGS IN
THE WORLD AND
WAS PUBLISHED
BY HALI TO
COINCIDE WITH
THE EXHIBITION

READING HALI IS LIKE LISTENING TO
A CARPET-ORIENTED BBC WORLD
SERVICE – SEEING CURRENT AFFAIRS
THROUGH THE EYE OF A NEEDLE



"They are intended for textile historians, but even when you understand the subject you still don't necessarily understand the articles."

Hali, however, is in direct contrast to academic publications of this kind; it is big, glossy, modern, well designed, filled with beautiful colour illustrations and reeking of expensive production. It looks equally at home on a living-room coffee table, in a dealer's gallery or in a museum library.

"Carpets and textiles can be a pretty bloody deadly boring subject even for people who are interested in them," says *Hali's* editor, Alan Marcuson, with typical frankness. "Unlike many journals in the scholarly world, we bring journalistic values to our magazine. *Hali* obviously has a strong art-historical bias, but we believe the best way to put this across is by having interesting, lively articles, good design principles and great pictures. We don't really believe, as a lot of academics do, that the only way an article can be worthy is if it's boring."

"After all," adds deputy editor Danny Shaffer, "no one's going to read an article about a fuzzy black and white picture of a boring thing, are they?"

Hali has been accused of many things in its fifteen-year career, from arrogance to irreverence, but rarely has it been described as dull. In part, this is a reflection of the immense range of its chosen theme. "Textiles and carpets are a door into cultural, social, political and economic history," says senior editor Jill Tilden. "We start at the dawn of time, day one, because weaving is of such fundamental importance to all cultures." In a recent issue, the subjects featured ranged from a fourth-century-BC painted Greek vase bearing one of the earliest recorded depictions of an oriental rug, via a medieval allegorical German carpet, to

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nineteenth- and twentieth-century ceremonial flags produced by the Fante people of Ghana – all beautifully depicted and strikingly different in style.

In covering its subject, *Hali* embraces every continent and every period, although there is some resistance to more modern Western textiles: “We do give contemporary work a little nod every now and then, but we are primarily interested in antique carpets and textiles and we don’t really want to open the door on what the Americans call ‘fiber arts,’” says Marcuson with a little shiver of distaste.

Yet, unlike other antiques magazines, *Hali* treats its objects as part of everyday life. Many of its articles include information about recent world events that have caused works of art to come to light or to disappear, or otherwise affect the field of textiles. The aforementioned issue contains an extended account of a carpet conference held in Tehran in June 1992, whose American delegates were the first US citizens officially allowed to visit Iran since the Islamic Revolution in 1979. Among these

“carpet diplomats” was the Oregon dealer James Opie, who, a special feature informs us, is currently petitioning the US State Department to lift the trade embargo on Iranian carpets. In another section of the magazine, readers are encouraged to write to the Turkish minister of culture about the neglect of the Vakıflar Carpet and Kilim Museum in Istanbul. Reading *Hali* is often like listening to a carpet-oriented BBC World Service – seeing current affairs through the eye of a needle. “We want to reflect the real world,” states Marcuson firmly. “We don’t want to be in an ivory tower hung with carpets and textiles, detached from the rest of mankind. You can’t ignore what is going on if you are interested in rugs from a particular area and that place is being torn apart by war.”

Hali is a specialist consumer magazine as well as an academic journal. The majority of its readers are carpet and textile dealers or collectors, and a recent survey revealed that ninety per cent of them actively purchased carpets and textiles – an advertiser’s dream. The most popular section in the magazine is the

COURTESY OF THE TEXTILE GALLERY, LONDON



FACING PAGE: A CENTRAL ANATOLIAN RUG WITH WIDE BLUE ARABESQUE BORDERS, 16TH TO 17TH CENTURY, 86 X 142CM (HALI 69). ABOVE: ANATOLIAN RUG OF THE UFLAK REGION WITH DOTTED WHITE GROUND, 137 X 196CM (HALI 4/4). LEFT: ALAN MARCUSON (IN RED), PUBLISHER AND EDITOR OF HALI, BROUGHT A COMBINATION OF CONTROVERSY, DISCIPLINE AND IRREVERENCE TO THE MAGAZINE WHEN HE JOINED IT IN 1984. WITH HIM IS HALI’S ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER, SEBASTIAN GHANDCHI



FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG

BELOW: ANATOLIAN VILLAGE RUG, KARAPINAR AREA,
LATE 17TH CENTURY, 135 X 259CM (HALI 38).
FACING PAGE: THE 'VON ANGELI' CLOUD-BAND PRAYER
RUG, UŞAK, 16TH CENTURY, 122 X 177CM (HALI 69)

Auction Price Guide, which gives selected results from sale-rooms throughout the world, complete with detailed and sometimes controversial editorial comment. More surprisingly, the advertising pages – often the *bête noire* of the person who reads general-interest magazines – are the second favourite. Constituting about a third of the magazine, the advertisements are no mere concessions to financial necessity: often as handsomely presented as the articles themselves, they provide an international shop window, showing who has what around the world to the people most likely to buy it. “If dealers advertise

the right piece, they can be ninety-five per cent sure they will get a response,” claims the associate publisher, Sebastian Ghandchi.

Whereas in other areas of the fine and decorative arts there is a division between academics and traders, this is not generally true when it comes to rugs and carpets. “Rug studies are not really based in the academic world,” explains Danny Shaffer. “There is an amateurism that is not the same in wider textile studies. A lot of carpet scholars are in fact dealers and collectors. A few of them are from museums, but it is seldom their first interest; they normally come to carpets

out of an interest in ethnography, Islamic art or social anthropology.” Indeed, some of today’s most respected figures in carpet scholarship first tripped over the subject whilst pursuing love, peace and exotic substances on the hippie trail in the 1960s and 70s. Marcuson himself, a clever and excitable character with an irreverent sense of humour, a laugh like a big bad wolf and a distinctly colourful use of language, scarcely fits the traditional image of an academic editor. His journalistic career began in the 1960s when he was London editor of America’s *Rolling Stone* magazine and started his own underground paper, *Friends*, the concerns of which he describes as “drugs, sex, rock and roll and politics”. “But that was in my misspent youth,” he makes clear, “and *Hali* is a very different thing altogether.” In 1972 Marcuson went to the exhibition of the Joseph V. McMullan collection of carpets at the Hayward Gallery in London, which quite simply changed his life. “I was completely captivated by the carpets – it was almost my Damascus. I knew then and there that carpets were for me, and that I would be involved in them for some time.” Marcuson immersed himself in the study of carpets and rugs and became a dealer. “Coming from the publishing world, the first thing I looked for was a trade magazine. I couldn’t believe that there wasn’t one, and in 1973 I had a meeting with Robert Pinner, Michael Franes and the designer Pearce Marchbank about the possibility of starting one.”

In 1978, Franes and Pinner launched *Hali*. It is typical of the field that neither of its founders had a museum background. Robert Pinner is a professional scientist, and a private collector who developed an interest in Turkoman carpets in the early 1970s and is today a leading specialist in

the subject; Michael Franes is one of the foremost carpet and textile dealers in the world. “I was keen to show that there was scholarship in carpets,” Franes explains, “that some had artistic merit and that most carpet dealers were neither rogues nor villains.”

Begun, in Marcuson’s words, as “an academic hobby by two committed ruggies”, *Hali* soon became the international bible of the antique carpet business. Ironically, this rapid success was nearly the publication’s downfall. “It was a special-interest journal run by people who knew a great deal about rugs but not about magazines,” explains Marcuson. “There were no magazine rules, no consistent design, no sub-editing – it got into all sorts of organisational and financial difficulties. As one accountant said, ‘You’re not just losing money, you’re bloody haemorrhaging.’”

At the height of *Hali*’s problems, in November 1984, Alan Marcuson arrived. “I came to help out, strictly for the weekend, and now it’s 1993 and I’m still here,” he laughs. After much internecine strife he was appointed editor, and together with his deputy, Danny Shaffer (“a well-educated collector who could speak English and even write it”) he set about resuscitating the ailing product. “We reinvented it from top to toe: I redesigned it with Pearce Marchbank, we changed the typeface and the look, brought in more colour, expanded the base to include textiles as well as rugs, and changed *Hali* from a specialised journal into a professional magazine.”

What this revitalised magazine needed more than anything else was serious funding – more than could be provided by private individuals, however committed. In 1986, Pinner and Franes sold their interest to an American company, the Quantum Corporation, owned by Ivan Boesky: “At the time he



CHRIS ALEXANDER COLLECTION, CALIFORNIA



'SMALL-PATTERN HOLBEIN' RUG WITH ROWS OF
INTERLACE ROSETTES, ANATOLIA, C.1500,
114 X 158 CM (HALI 69). FACING PAGE: ANATOLIAN
KILIM, BEFORE 1750, 203 X 223 CM (HALI 53)

was considered the cleverest man in the world, making hundreds of millions of dollars, which everyone thought he was doing because he was so brilliant; we were only later to discover it was because he was

insider dealing," says Marcuson. "We went to New York, sold *Hali* to the Quantum Corporation, and no sooner did we get back to London, having at last got some real money behind us and some proper

clout, than Ivan Boesky hit the headlines and went to jail."

For six months, Marcuson and his staff muddled along under the leaking Quantum umbrella, until someone drew their attention to an advertise-

ment in a business magazine offering *Hali* up for sale. "Because it was the 1980s and everyone was starting up magazines, we got an incredible response," recalls Shaffer. The magazine was bought out by its present owner, Centaur Communications, an English publishing company specialising in business magazines, whose roster includes *Creative Review*, *The Lawyer*, *Marketing Week* and *Design Week*. "To say the least, we were an odd bird in their nest, but it's a very good relationship." Today *Hali* is based in Kilburn, west London. With a staff of twenty, it is one of the largest commercial employers in the field of antique carpets and textiles in Europe. "We're a big fish in a small pond," explains Shaffer. "*Hali* plays a much more central role in its world than other magazines do in theirs. Over the years we've probably met a third of our readers, and we know what collectors are going to buy before they do themselves." The magazine provides a forum for dealers, collectors and academics across the world, and its readership is passionately loyal. "I think it's wonderful," says the V&A's Jennifer Wearden. "I would find it very difficult to do my job without *Hali*." The London dealer Clive Loveless agrees. "We would all be very much at a loss without it," he says. "It is essential reading for dealers."

In a way, *Hali* comes across as an idealised collector who knows all the people, reads all the books and can afford to visit every exhibition and event. "A good number of readers buy *Hali* as an alternative to buying more expensive carpets," says Shaffer. "It's a sort of deferred gratification, a rug substitute."

The magazine's news pages constitute a frequently irreverent gossip column for the carpet world. The reviews of books and exhibitions are influential and often hard-hitting. "We have been known to trample



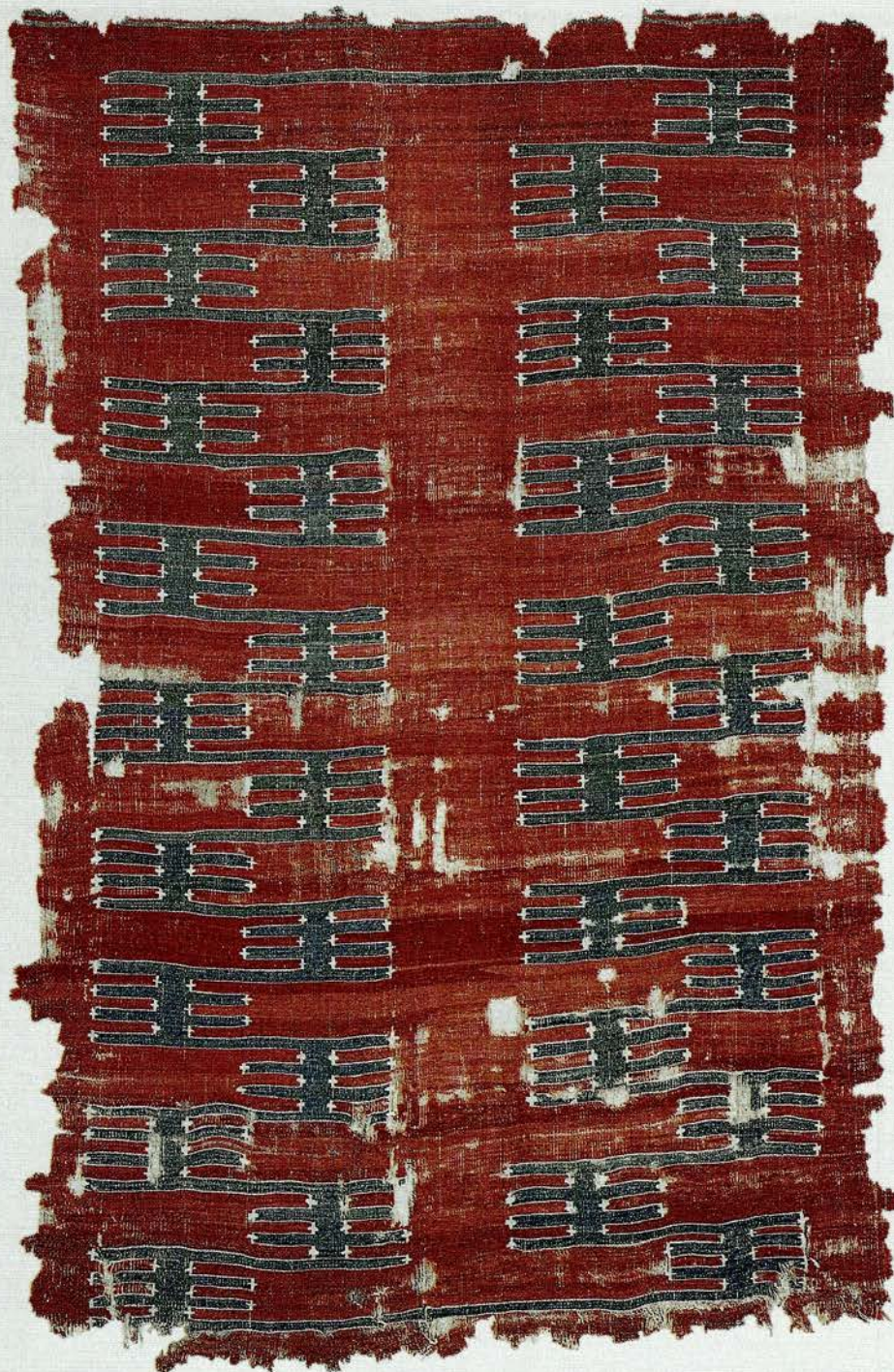
MUSEUM OF ISLAMIC ART, BERLIN

on toes, and we don't automatically defer to professional scholarship," says Marcuson. "We like to keep a critical edge. We encourage controversy, speculation, all those things that frighten people. And we're not always terribly polite."

Although *Hali* is known and sometimes reviled for its puckish sense of humour, at its heart is a serious respect for carpets and textiles. Everybody on the staff, whether in the editorial or advertising department, is fascinated by the subject, and most of them have been there for several years. "It's not just a job, it's a vocation," explains senior editor Maria Schlatter. "*Hali* is basically a way of looking at the world." Over the years the publication has covered most of the subjects in its wide geographical and historical field. "The magazine has an encyclopædic quality about it," says Marcuson. He indicates the complete run of back issues ranged impressively behind his desk. "You don't need to go much further than these seventy volumes if you really want to find out about carpets and textiles."

Hali has provided a launching pad for new discoveries and ideas and has improved standards of description and dating of textiles. It has also popularised its subject and confirmed its importance to our culture. "In Alexander's time, soldiers were not allowed to requisition weavers' homes," says Marcuson. "When Timur conquered most of the known world, all his troops had strict orders not to disrupt the weaving factories. In the Middle Ages, weavers had exactly the same status as painters. It was the Renaissance that established the cult of the individual, the named artist, and we have suffered from it ever since. We are here to cultivate an appreciation of this craft that is so fundamental to our existence." ♦

McCoy Jones Collection, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco



A ONE-YEAR (SIX-ISSUE) SUBSCRIPTION TO *HALI* COSTS £60 (EUROPE AND TURKEY), US\$104 (USA & CANADA) AND £75 (REST OF THE WORLD). SINGLE COPY PRICE: £19/US\$34/DM62. WRITE TO *HALI* PUBLICATIONS LTD, CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT, KINGSGATE HOUSE, KINGSGATE PLACE, LONDON NW6 4TA. TEL 44-71 328 9341 AND ASK FOR ASHLEY SPINKS; FAX 44-71 372 5924. FOR A 24-HOUR RECORDED SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE TEL 44-71 328 1998





THE FOURTH ESTATE

COMPETITION BETWEEN TURKEY'S NEWSPAPERS HAS ASSUMED A NEW FORM.

THE BIG THREE HAVE TAKEN THEIR QUARREL TO THE MARGINS OF ISTANBUL, WHERE THEIR SLEEK NEW HEADQUARTERS VIE TO DOMINATE THE LANDSCAPE. ANDREW FINKEL REPORTS



THE POWER OF THE PRESS AS EXERCISED IN THE IMPOSING BOARDROOM AT SABAH, LEFT, CONTRASTS WITH AUSTERE CONCRETE, ABOVE, IN ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST ADVANCED NEWS-PAPER BUILDINGS. ABOVE RIGHT: THE COOLEST OF HOT SEATS FOR GUESTS

For centuries the Sublime Porte, a wooden archway in the heart of old Istanbul, signified the Ottoman administration, to whose ministries it was once the threshold. It was there that the passport was conceived.

In more recent decades the Sublime Porte became a colloquialism for an empire of quite a different sort, as lorries bearing great rolls of newsprint made their improbable way through the crowded back streets leading up to the Covered Bazaar and out again with the next day's editions of Turkey's newspaper industry. The Porte – Bab-i Ali in

Turkish – came to mean the Fourth Estate.

Now this too has been consigned to history. As with London's Fleet Street, it is now an anachronism to refer to Bab-i Ali as Istanbul's press district. The big three media giants have deserted the city centre for the new industrial estates near the airport. Their three new buildings are designed to expand with the growing ambitions of Turkey's multi-media barons. Already they are home not just to newspapers and a range of magazine titles but also to entire television studios.

Normally, only three million or so people in Turkey – a country as populous as Britain – can be persuaded to

THE GLASS WALLS OF THE NEW MILLIYET HEAD-QUARTERS, TOP, REFLECT BLUE SKIES AND SHEER OPTIMISM. BEHIND THE FAÇADE WHIR THE PAPER'S PRINTING PRESSES. ALL PHOTOGRAPHS BY SIMON UPTON

part with the cover price of a daily paper. The new buildings represent the latest stage in a battle involving bitter competitors more used to dreaming up new promotional schemes. When one paper offered a car as the prize in a lottery competition, another started to give away cars with chauffeurs. One's offer of a new flat was countered with another's promise of an entire apartment block. Readers of one paper were vying not all that long ago to win an inter-city coach.

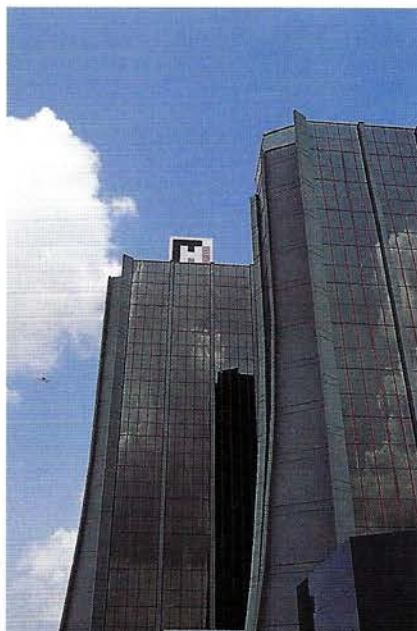
Recent editorials have saved their choicest mud to sling not at politicians but at fellow newspapers. One front-page article revealed that the supposedly brand new jeep a rival paper had promised as the prize in a bingo-style competition was the editor-in-chief's own car, substantially repaired after he had crashed it on holiday.

The editor-in-chief of *Hürriyet* tells of the ad department's amusement when what they assumed was a practical joker came out on top in one of the paper's lotteries. Double-checking to make sure, they discovered to their amazement that Mrs Turgut Özal, wife of the Turkish president, had indeed cut out the coupons to win a colour television set.

As part of their new high-mindedness, newspapers now compete to give away encyclopedias. Readers can choose to read fascicles of Larousse or Encyclopædia Britannica over their morning breakfast. Meanwhile, the proprietors and their architects are duelling to dominate the skyline with a new generation of purpose-built HQs.

Leading the way was the Medi Group with its flagship *Sabah* newspaper. *Sabah* has always been the brash iconoclast. Driven by technology, it had its journalists working on terminals when most of their colleagues – not only in Turkey but abroad too – were still tapping on Remingtons. The paper is still only eight years old and was not even four when it outgrew its printing presses. Plans were made to move to vast new premises with smoked-glass exteriors, open-plan offices and Italian and Swiss furnishings of the latest ergonomic design.

"It's uncompromisingly modernist yet answers all the post-modernist worries over richness and variety of interior,"



fellow architect Oğuz says in praise of Mehmet Kunalalp's *Sabah* building. The large internal courtyards, overlooked by cliff-edge balconies, give dramatic panoramic views, yet people who work there say they are close to everything they need and everyone they want to talk to.

Hürriyet, *Sabah*'s close rival, has its new headquarters across the street (albeit a busy motorway). Unlike Kunalalp's horizontal structure, this has the imposing vertical swoop of a small skyscraper. It is a much larger building altogether – some 60,000 square metres, complete with a steel-tent-like annexe, originally intended as a staff canteen but now a VIP lounge sheathed in stained glass.

According to the building's architect, Aydın Boysan, who is responsible for the premises of many well-known Turkish manufacturers, the great challenge of designing a newspaper office is to accommodate two quite different functions – a printing plant and a creative area for the editorial staff.

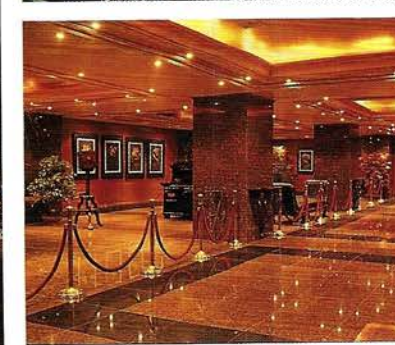
In the *Hürriyet* building, Boysan keeps these functions separate. Journalists used to the cramped corners and dirty ashtrays of the old newsroom are now pampered with space.

Boysan describes as somewhat gimmicky the way the printing presses have been turned into a show for the benefit of the editorial offices in the *Sabah* building. Yet a similar approach has been taken in the third newspaper tiger, the new building of *Milliyet* – designed by Dr Hayati Tabanlıoğlu (architect of Istanbul's Atatürk Airport and the opera house in Taksim Square) and his Vienna-trained son, Murat – where physical plant and offices have clear sight of one another through a glass wall.

The sight of the presses waiting to print the next day's edition gives a sense of immediacy to what journalists are doing, according to Murat. Lest the reminder of imminent deadlines be too stressful, there is a restful green area separating the two. The building is set – for the time being, at least – in open ground, shielded by free-ways from the encroaching urban sprawl.

Those who work there seem to approve. "Nice, convenient, comfortable, the latest in intelligent buildings. Everything is controlled – except the journalists," says Temuçin Tüzecan, *Milliyet*'s foreign editor. ♦

HÜRRIYET'S LAVISH NEW HEADQUARTERS.
 FACING PAGE, TOP AND CENTRE: TALL STOREYS.
 BOTTOM: REFLECTED GLORY – THE PAPER'S FOUNDER
 SEDAT SIMAVI (1896-1953). BELOW AND CENTRE
 RIGHT: A BAROQUE SUBTERRANEAN STAIRWAY SNAKES
 PAST A ROCK GARDEN. TOP RIGHT: SYNTHETIC
 STARS IN THE MEDIA FIRMAMENT. BOTTOM RIGHT:
 BRIGHT LIGHTS AND RED ROPES IN THE HALLWAY





A TALK

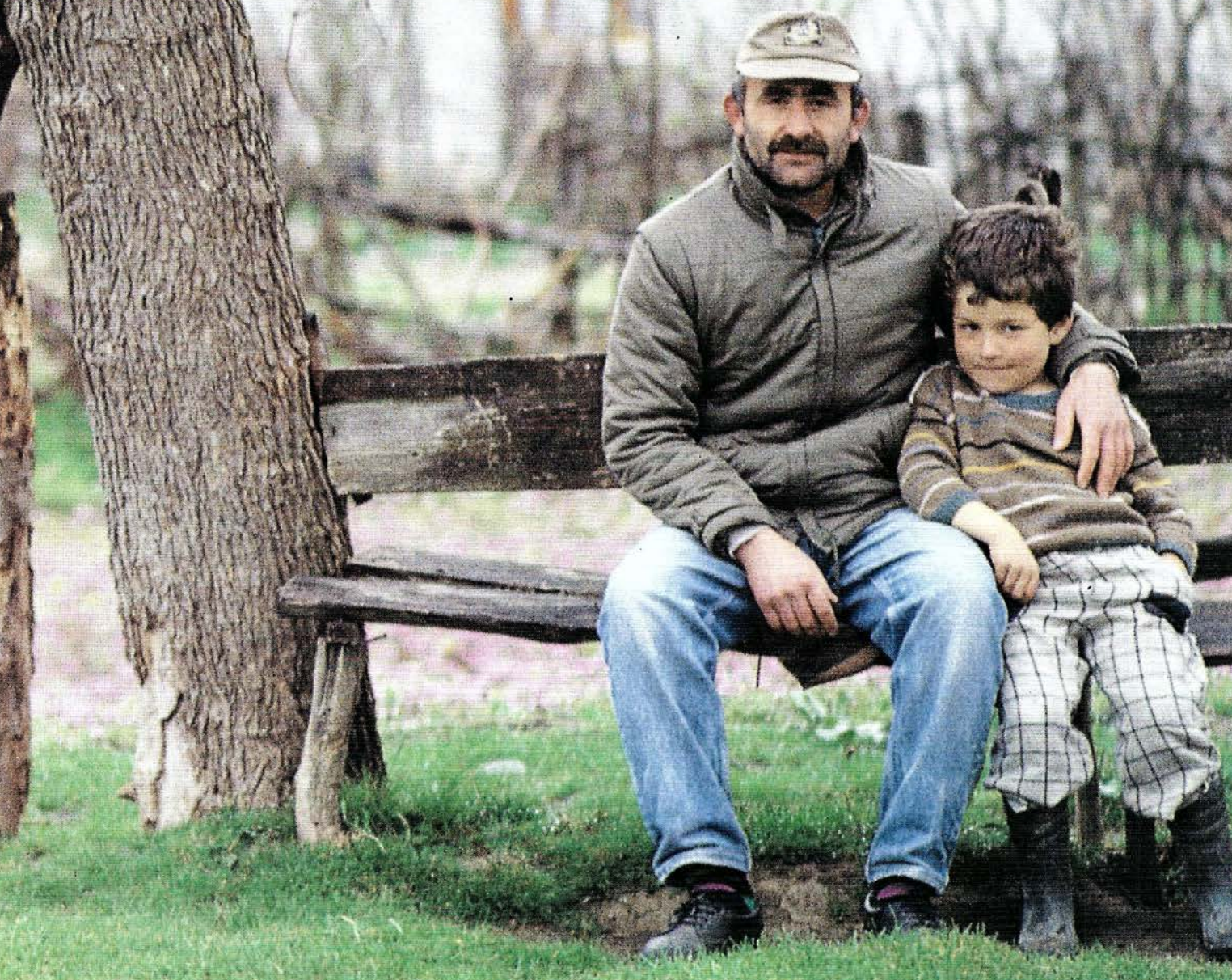
FATHER AND SON IN KAYALAR, AN ABKHAZIAN VILLAGE NEAR
ADAPAZARI IN NORTH-WEST TURKEY, WHERE THE OTTOMAN
SULTAN GRANTED FERTILE FARMING LAND TO
ABKHAZIAN AND CIRCASSIAN REFUGEES AFTER THE CONQUEST
OF THE NORTHERN CAUCASUS BY TSARIST RUSSIA IN 1864

"In the last glance I tried to remember our home exactly as it was, to fix it in my mind for ever. Then when we got on to the boat I looked back – the view of Sukhumi from the sea is very fine. You know, my eyes were full of tears. I knew I should never see it again. We – my sister Indira, my mother and I – only had what we stood up in. We had left everything, even my brother, who had stayed to fight."

SVETA BASARIA, A RECENT REFUGEE FROM SUKHUMI, CAPITAL OF ABKHAZIA

OF TWO HOMELANDS

THE ABKHAZIAN IS AMONG THE MANY PEOPLES WHO HAVE FLED IN WAVES FROM THE CAUCASUS TO FIND REFUGE IN TURKEY. THE PHOTOGRAPHER SIMON UPTON CAPTURES THE RURAL FACE OF ABKHAZIAN CULTURE AS IT HAS SURVIVED IN THE VALLEYS OF ADAPAZARI EAST OF ISTANBUL SINCE THE 1860S. AND THE WRITER JEREMY JAMES CROSSES THE BLACK SEA TO DISCOVER THIS PROUD PEOPLE'S ORIGINAL HOMELAND IN THE FORMER SOVIET UNION AND WITNESS THEIR STRUGGLE TO PRESERVE IT



Two hours east of Istanbul, by a river below the mountains that rise from Turkey's northern coast, stands a stone house belonging to an Abkhazian. The Abkhazians are a mountain people. In 1864, they were driven from their homeland in their thousands by Tsarist troops. They settled in Turkey. The house has wooden casement windows and a wooden balcony with a carved heart design. The garden is mostly down to grass and there is a pergola with vines and honeysuckle and a forsythia nearby. Behind the house is a wood and beside it an orchard of hazel trees; in front, beyond the lawn, are cherry trees.

The air is full of birdsong and the scent of pine. Behind it snow powders a distant mountain, and before it is a long, long view over the Black Sea.

Across the sea, in Abkhazia itself, an old man -- they said he was eighty-five -- with a long grey moustache smiled: a huge smile. He had a crazy hat on and carried a thumb-stick he had cut himself. He opened the door of a rusty yellow Volga and climbed in, prodding the rear door as he went. Acknowledging his signal, I climbed in the back. The driver fired the engine and we went off on the road to Sukhumi, capital of Abkhazia, then cut up left on a rough track, passing a few skinny horses and a few skinny water buffalo grazing on the new spring grass. The track was like the river, made of river stone; after bumping along it for a quarter of an hour or



so we pulled up into a courtyard where there was a strangely familiar stone house with wooden casement windows and a wooden balcony with a carved heart design. Behind the house was a wood and beside it an orchard of hazel trees; in front, beyond the lawn, cherry trees. The air was full of birdsong and the scent of pine. Behind it rose the snowy peaks of the Kavkas, and before it lay a long, long view of the Black Sea.

The old man took me to another house, made from nutwood heatherings; a wickerwork house, all of a picture, with a wooden roof and red tiles and nothing inside except a fire in the middle and a long wood table. There we sat and drank his home-distilled slivovitz and ate smoked cheese, hard as stone; sound stuff, makes you feel good, like a lot of salmon does, which is what we ate later, caught from the Bzib river. All round the walls of this wickerwork house were skins of deer that the old man had shot up in the Kavkas. He was proud of those skins.

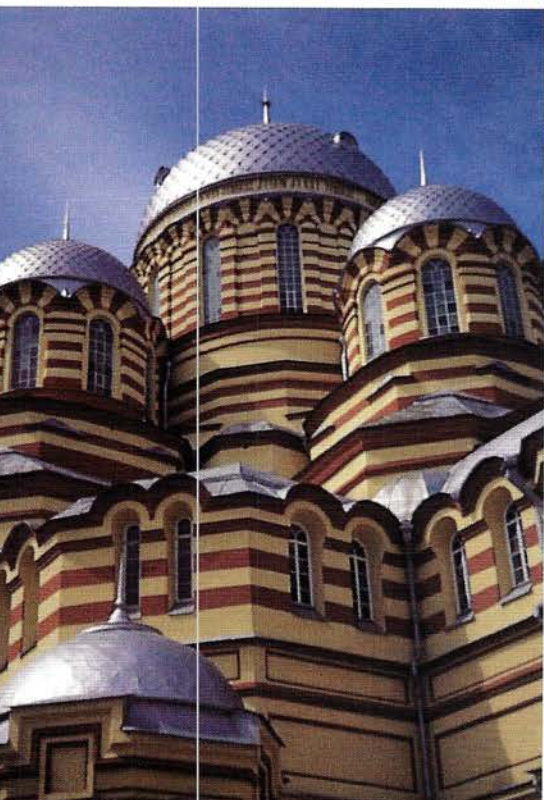
I ate my smoked cheese and drank the slivovitz as the old boy drank toasts to everyone. The Abkhazians drink many toasts to entertain strangers. Then the old man told a story about the olden days, right at the beginning of time, when the god was dividing up the earth for all his people. When it came to the Abkhazians' turn they were late, so the god went to look for them and found them entertaining everyone. The god watched them and saw how they did not count the cost of what they did, but

gave freely and with open hearts. And although the god was pleased with them, he frowned. And he frowned because by this time he had given all the land away and there was nothing left for the Abkhazians. And so he thought, and as he thought he watched how they were too busy baking bread and making cheese and distilling slivovitz and making toasts to pay any attention to him. But he smiled and turned away because he had decided what to do.

He gave them a little piece of his place, a little piece of paradise.

I was fortunate enough to be a guest in Abkhazia for a few days in the spring of this year. Before I went I knew nothing of the Abkhazians, save for a brief meeting with the descendants of those who had fled from their homeland in the 1860s, who now live in villages around the Turkish town of Adapazarı. I knew nothing of Abkhazian history and little of their culture. In the time I spent with them in the town of Pitsunda, I learned, and saw the land they live in. Then, on my last day, Veliko, the mayor of Pitsunda, arranged for a car to take me to Sochi. There was no charge. And for the hotel where I had stayed: no charge. As I was leaving, he took me by the shoulders and looked me squarely in the eye. "We do not know how to make money in Abkhazia; we like to give, not take: this is our way. It will be a long time before we rebuild our country."

The man said it with a tear.



JEREMY JAMES



UNRELATED TO INDO-EUROPEAN OR TURKIC LANGUAGES, ABKHAZ IS THE MOST STRIKING ASPECT OF ABKHAZIAN CULTURE, STILL SPOKEN BOTH IN ABKHAZIA ITSELF AND IN VILLAGES IN TURKEY SUCH AS KAYALAR, ABOVE AND RIGHT. FACING PAGE: NEW ATHOS, A MONASTERY ON ABKHAZIA'S BLACK SEA COAST, WHERE TSARIST RUSSIANS BUILT ELEGANT RESORTS

I tried a reply and bungled it, and in the distance the guns thundered.

Looking back, I am amazed that I had felt so little for the Abkhazians to begin with. Looking back I regret that I saw no reason for their struggle, thought of them as a militant minority in some forsaken landscape with nothing to offer. But then I had not seen it.

That day, I saw the last of Abkhazia. I saw Gagra.

Gagra lies on the road north towards the Russian border. Sveta Basaria and her sister Indira, my guides, wanted me to see it, to witness the damage done to

the city by the retreating troops, and on the way they told the stories. They told me of terror and privation, and all the misery that goes with war. But where they saw chaos, I saw beauty. Where they talked of atrocities I was watching dolphins. Where they pointed out another house that had been blown apart I saw only the colonnaded glory beside it and the palm-smoothed shore. I saw the pink gazebos above the beach, the villas and the clear water, gazed through cypress and gum and the young yellow dates in the trees.

That was the old part of Gagra, which, in spite of the war and seventy years of communism, is still wonderful.

Maybe it was the trees and the birds and the sea that gave it that feel, you might say, or maybe it was the absence of traffic or people, you might think. But in reality it was far more than that.

It is a little piece of paradise. If private capital were injected into the place – sensitively, with a real grasp of the artistry of the coastline – and the bruised psyche of the people were restored and vigour returned, Gagra would rival the best in the world.

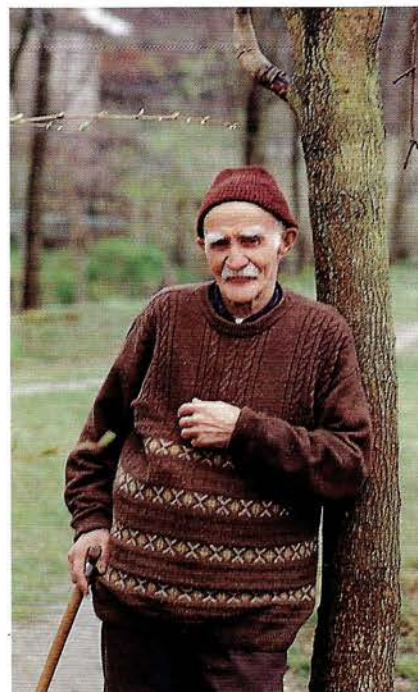
The rest of the drive up to the border was not so good. The magic had gone: this was a country at war.

At the border I was frisked and hassled by the sly Russian border official, trying his luck for a dollar, but Sveta and Indira brushed him aside and saved me the robbery. They even managed to have my hotel bill in Sochi reduced from sixty to five dollars a night.

A short while later they had to go back. But in order to take advantage of what was a rare excursion to Sochi they decided to buy some food – there is little in Abkhazia now. By way of trying to return some of the goodwill, I offered to buy it for them, and coffee or tea or some little luxury – anything they needed. They refused point-blank. They had money, they said; they would not take mine, no way – they are Abkhazians. When they left and we said our good-byes, they took home with them three cabbages, three carrots and a beetroot.

When the war is over in Abkhazia they hope the big new Turkish hotel will be full again and investment begun before the war will be renewed. And they hope this because they have cousins and family and friends in Turkey who live in the mountains, two hours east of Istanbul. ♦

Fewer than 100,000 Abkhazians remain in Abkhazia. Since Jeremy James travelled there in spring 1993, they have regained tenuous control and are now seeking real autonomy.



A SHORT HISTORY OF ABKHAZIA

8th century AD: kingdom of Abkhazia is established, incorporating western Georgia
16th century: Ottoman influence spreads over eastern Black Sea coast.

1864: Tsarist Russia conquers North Caucasus. Many Abkhazians flee to Turkey and non-Abkhazians settle in Abkhazia. By 1900 only half of population is Abkhazian

1922: Soviet republics of Abkhazia and Georgia join Transcaucasian Federation
1931: Stalin reduces Abkhazia to autonomous republic within Georgia, imposing Georgian script and language

1953 Stalin dies. Abkhazians permitted to reconstruct their culture
1978: Brezhnev sends in troops to quell riots
1989: 30,000 petition for independence from Georgia. Branch of Tbilisi University set up in Sukhumi to further Georgian influence. Clashes in Sukhumi and Ochamchira

1991: Abkhazia votes to join new CIS
1992: Shevarnadze gains international recognition for a new Georgian republic which includes Abkhazia. Abkhazia seeks new federal relationship. During negotiations Georgia sends troops into Sukhumi. Abkhazia claims occupation

BARS AND STRIPES

COFFEE HAS COME HOME TO ROOST (AND TO ROAST) IN THE SMART NEW HAUNTS OF ISTANBUL, WHERE THE CHATTERING CLASSES MEET FOR CONVERSATION OVER STEAMING CAPPUCCINI AND FILLING FETTUCCINE. NICHOLAS HASLAM DISCOVERS THE LATEST CAFÉ SOCIETY



FULL CIRCLE DEPARTMENT. It was Turkey that gave the world the taste for coffee in the first place; and in Istanbul, from the heyday of post-Byzantine erudition to the evening alpenglow of late Ottoman splendour, the coffee house was the meeting place for the cultured citizen and the curious traveller alike. Now the city has taken cosmopolitan café culture and given it a bang-up-to-date twist as decisive as the *nokta* above a line of swirling Islamic script.

Fanning out from old Pera and Beyoğlu are the newly fashionable heights of Nişantaşı, Maçka and Cihangir. It is in these urbane districts that the delightful additions to Istanbul's street-smart scene can be found, with their quenching fusion of light, quickly served food available throughout the livelong day, and drinks of all types and strengths – including, of course, coffee.

There is espresso, black as night, with perhaps just a sliver of lemon peel; *corretti* laced with grappa or cognac; foam-domed cappuccino, gurgle-thick and fast from state-of-the-art machines – while the indigenous Turkish coffee, finely ground to create a damascene liquid, offers purists a more traditional way of getting their fix.

In Maçka, opposite a vast neoclassical building that was to be the new Italian embassy until the kilim was pulled from beneath its foundations to Ankara, Osman Şav sprawls on the banquettes of Palazzo, his terracotta-walled *kahvehane*. A young giant with glossy, tousled hair, he was educated in France, Italy and the United States, so



ABOVE: ANTARES, WITH ITS CONFORMIST SALMON-PINK WALLS AND LEAFY GARDEN, OFFERS TRANQUILLITY RATHER THAN FRIVOLITY. LEFT: SUSAM IS THE PLACE TO SEE AND BE SEEN IN CİHANGİR; IT IS JUST ONE OF THE MANY HAUNTS TO HAVE TAKEN STRIPES AS A THEME. OPPOSITE PAGE: ŞEBNEM ÇAPA'S ÇANÇAN, DECORATED LIKE A CELESTIAL BOUDOIR, IS THE RENDEZVOUS OF THE CHATTERING CLASSES

he knows a thing or two about coffee, and he has strong ideas about its presentation. "In the last fifty years we have found a national identity," he says, "but remember, before that, Istanbul was the most cosmopolitan city in Europe, where every type of delicacy could be found. We need to revive that." Mačka was, and to a large extent still is, the Italianate centre of the city, and Palazzo fills up by midday, answering anxious demands for a quick *ristretto*, another *doppio*. Şav's Palazzo was the first of the new cafés. He designed it himself, and its signature blue and white stripes have become something of a flag for those restaurateurs who have followed.

But join the trail of leggy girls in Moschino and boys in Ralph Lauren around the streets of Nişantaşı and you are sure to end up at Keyif, the busy café-restaurant on Mim Kemal Öke Caddesi owned and run by two sisters, Ayla Savand and Ayşe Kapanıcı. Their other interests are a com-



puter business and a language school, which may account for both the zippy service and the polyglot voiceovers. At any one time, Keyif can comfortably serve several hundred lunches at happily crowded little tables in vaguely Vienna-Secession-style rooms and on its leafy patio. Like the district's other cafés, Keyif uses the clever wheeze of having its many friends prepare the puddings, with cheesecake delivered in relays. Here the scions of Istanbul's elite meet for their

favourite cuppa. Be warned: the coffee comes on a jumbo scale; a "large espresso" is big enough for four to take flight on.

If you prefer a more peaceful landing slot, go just around the corner to Antares. Here, a wide crescent of a room opens onto a leafy garden, the tables are large, the chairs have arms and cushions and the music is soft. Take a paper, a book, even a friend and stay all day, maybe all evening. Or try Çançan, Şebnem Çapa's café of shining wood and muted richness which has the ambience of an Edwardian library – though the food is too good to allow much reading. The welcoming small ground-floor room leads to a spacious refuge above. With its sober green and red decor relieved by fancy frills, this looks like the female equivalent of a gentlemen's club. Ribbons abound, adorning delicate Hamidian lights and reverentially framed black and white

portraits of previous Çapa generations. There are dinky teapots sprouting flowers on each table, antique mirrors and *trompe l'oeil* bookshelves on the walls – all complementing the constantly buzzing banquet of gourmet gossip.

Stripes are once again the dominant theme at Susam, in nearby Cihangir. On three terraced levels, with a spellbinding view of the Bosphorus, this elegantly rustic café has become the requisite meeting place, and at night seems more like a restaurant that can vie with Park Şamdan and others in the

area for both delicious food and glamorous customers. This is the place to have a caffeine fix before dancing the night away at Taksim Nightpark and 2019, or to spend the small hours laughing over champagne and cappuccino. Either way, in the morning you will be ready for another espresso at Palazzo. Full circle department. ♦

ISTANBUL'S NEW CAFÉ-RESTAURANTS

ANTARES, VALİKONAĞI CAD 8, NİŞANTAŞI. TEL (212) 224 9666
OPEN 11AM-MIDNIGHT. CLOSED SUNDAY.

CAFÉ ÇANÇAN, HÜSREV GEREDİ CAD 87, TEŞVİKİYE.
TEL (212) 261 1616. OPEN 11AM-6.30PM. CLOSED SUNDAY.

CAFÉ KEYİF, MİM KEMAL ÖKE CAD 4, NİŞANTAŞI.
TEL (212) 225 2019. OPEN 8.30AM-10PM. CLOSED SUNDAY.

PALAZZO, MAÇKA CAD 35, MAÇKA. TEL (212) 232 0451.
OPEN 11AM-8PM. CLOSED SUNDAY.

SUSAM, SUSAM SOK 6, CİHANGİR. TEL (212) 251 5935/6.
OPEN DAILY 12-3PM AND 7.30PM UNTIL DAWN.



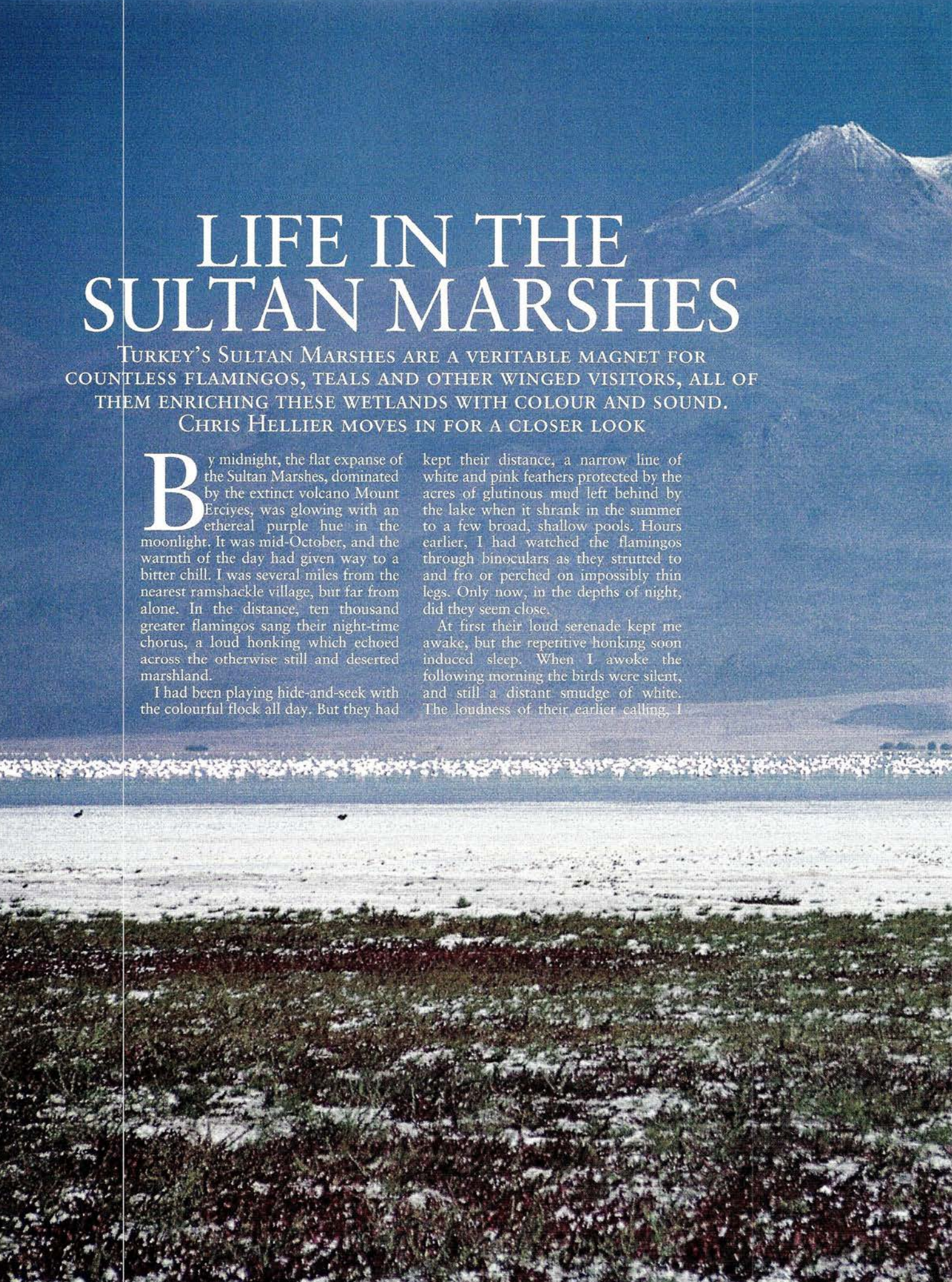
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LIFE IN THE SULTAN MARSHES

TURKEY'S SULTAN MARSHES ARE A VERITABLE MAGNET FOR COUNTLESS FLAMINGOS, TEALS AND OTHER WINGED VISITORS, ALL OF THEM ENRICHING THESE WETLANDS WITH COLOUR AND SOUND.

CHRIS HELLIER MOVES IN FOR A CLOSER LOOK

By midnight, the flat expanse of the Sultan Marshes, dominated by the extinct volcano Mount Erciyes, was glowing with an ethereal purple hue in the moonlight. It was mid-October, and the warmth of the day had given way to a bitter chill. I was several miles from the nearest ramshackle village, but far from alone. In the distance, ten thousand greater flamingos sang their night-time chorus, a loud honking which echoed across the otherwise still and deserted marshland.

I had been playing hide-and-seek with the colourful flock all day. But they had

kept their distance, a narrow line of white and pink feathers protected by the acres of glutinous mud left behind by the lake when it shrank in the summer to a few broad, shallow pools. Hours earlier, I had watched the flamingos through binoculars as they strutted to and fro or perched on impossibly thin legs. Only now, in the depths of night, did they seem close.

At first their loud serenade kept me awake, but the repetitive honking soon induced sleep. When I awoke the following morning the birds were silent, and still a distant smudge of white. The loudness of their earlier calling, I



THOUSANDS OF GREATER FLAMINGOS APPEAR AS A NARROW STRIP OF WHITE AT THE FOOT OF MOUNT ERICYTE, THE VOLCANIC MOUNTAIN THAT DOMINATES THE SULTAN MARSHES. THE BIRDS REST IN CENTRAL ANATOLIA'S WETLANDS DURING THEIR SPRING AND AUTUMN MIGRATIONS.

WHEN I AWOKE THE FOLLOWING MORNING THE BIRDS WERE SILENT... BUT TELLTALE

thought, had been due to the sound drifting on the night breeze, but telltale footprints within metres of where I had lain suggested that the marsh flamingos had paid a closer call.

The number of flamingos on the Sultan Marshes, one of Turkey's most important wetlands for migratory birds, had passed its autumn peak. Many had already left for warmer climes in Africa, and other groups were rising in ungainly flight to join them. Others stood motionless with their heads buried in the shallow lake, feeding on minute molluscs and algae.

These remarkable creatures are the only birds that filter their food. Holding their heads and bills upside down in the water, they use their tongues as plungers to push water and mud along the length of their long, shallow bills. Filters known as lamellae catch any unwanted grit and mud, but let tasty morsels pass into their gullets.

Up to 70,000 greater flamingos have been recorded at the marshes, and they have been known to breed here. Some 250 other bird species also spend part of the year in Sultan Sazlığı, as the marshes are known in Turkish. The International Council for Bird Preservation estimates that around forty per cent of all waterfowl wintering in Turkey head for this Central Anatolian marshland. The commonest are teals, in numbers of up to half a million, but there are also significant populations of pintails, wigeons, coots, shovelers and ruddy shelducks. While migrating birds like flamingos, pelicans and cranes use the marshes mainly as a seasonal resting place, other birds including red-necked grebes, little bitterns, and several heron species choose them as regular or occasional breeding grounds. The reed beds are particularly important for the largest breeding colony of pygmy cormorants in Turkey.

That October morning I caught sight of twenty-five of the marshes' commoner species. Indeed, autumn is one of the most rewarding seasons to see birds. At this time, some of the migrators are still in temporary residence, and the number of water birds planning to spend the winter there will have been increasing slowly since August.

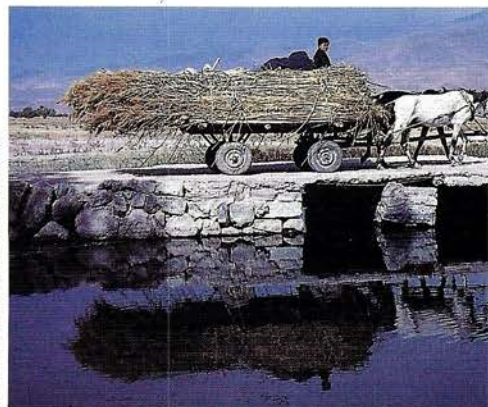
But on the muddy shore of Yay Gölü I was unable to get close to the flamingos and other birds, which appeared as mere specks in the distance. I decided to head for the reed beds to the south, where the thick vegetation would afford

me ample cover. As I began to walk southwards, following a dirt track that sweeps round the marshes' eastern flank, I met a peasant driving a horse and cart loaded with freshly cut reeds. He seemed surprised to see a stranger wandering the marshes, binoculars in hand, but he readily offered me a lift to Ovaçiftlik, where he said I could hire a boat to take me into the thick reed beds.

For the local villagers the reed beds are a valuable resource. In spring they cut green reeds for cattle fodder, but the big harvest is in the autumn, when acres are cut to fuel fires and to cover the roofs of village houses. Better-quality reeds are exported as thatching material to England, Germany and other countries. In particularly dry years the farmers can drive their carts quite close to the reed beds, and several set up camp there, but in wet years a reed-cutter's boat is the only way of penetrating the narrow marsh channels.

The boat I had been promised turned out to be a makeshift flat-bottomed affair. It was stable enough, though, and with Mustafa, its owner, I set out to explore further. Slowly we edged our way between thickets of reeds two to three metres high, the prow cutting gently through the still waters. There was a rustle to the right, and a ruddy shelduck broke cover and flew swiftly overhead. Mustafa thrust his punting pole into the mud and we inched forward, leaving circles of brown water behind.

After ten minutes we were out in the main reed beds and headed for a mud bank. Ducks had chosen this spot to build their nests: raised hollows of earth, held together with twigs and grass. "They've left," said Mustafa, stating the obvious, and they certainly were not going to return until we moved on. Mustafa then headed for a larger bank submerged under a few inches of water, where several hundred flamingos were still biding their time, being among the last birds to leave on their autumn migration. As we edged closer, the flock seemed to move as one, walking away from us, worried by our slow advance. But two remained behind, standing their ground. "We can't go much further," a concerned Mustafa informed me. "We'll get stuck in the mud. But we can get a good look at those two there." He pointed to the pink-tinged pair. They turned their heads slowly, ruffled their feathers and flew directly overhead, honking loudly on their way to Africa. ♦



ALL PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRIS HELLIER

FOOTPRINTS SUGGESTED THAT THE MARSH FLAMINGOS HAD PAID A CLOSER CALL



AUTUMN ON THE SULTAN MARSHES. FACING PAGE FROM TOP: ABOARD A REED-CUTTER'S BOAT; A NESTING PYGMY CORMORANT; A HORSE AND CART ON ITS WAY TO TOWN. THIS PAGE, MAIN PICTURE: A WHITE PELICAN STRETCHES ITS WINGS. TOP LEFT TO RIGHT: THE RUDDY SHELDUCK, THE BRIGHTEST OF THE DUCKS BUT BECOMING RARER; TWO GREATER FLAMINGOS TAKE FLIGHT – THESE ELEGANT BIRDS ARE MONOGAMOUS AND CAN LIVE TO THE AGE OF FIFTY; THE SUN RISES OVER A REED-CUTTER'S TENT AND (BELOW) SETS OVER THE MARSHES



TRAVEL

THE SULTAN MARSHES (SULTAN SAZLIĞI) LIE SOUTH-WEST OF CAPPADOCIA, 4-5 HOURS FROM ANKARA. THE REGION'S BEST HOTELS ARE AT ÜRGÜP, WHICH OFFERS DAY TRIPS TO THE MARSHES. THE NEAREST, RATHER BASIC, HOTELS ARE IN THE VILLAGE OF YEŞILHISAR: REED-CUTTERS' BOATS MAY BE HIRED IF THE MARSHES HAVE NOT DRIED UP DURING THE SUMMER. THERE IS A NATIONAL PARK OBSERVATION TOWER AND EXHIBITION CENTRE (WITH STUFFED FLAMINGOS!) AT OVAÇIFTLIK ON THE ROAD FROM YEŞILHISAR TO YAHYALI.



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SOUL FRUIT

POMEGRANATES, LONG ENJOYED FOR THEIR SUCCULENCE AND THEIR INNER BEAUTY, HAVE BEEN CREDITED WITH UPLIFTING PROPERTIES.

BERRIN TOROLSAN PRESENTS A SELECTION OF RECIPES USING THESE FASCINATING JEWELLED WINTER FRUITS

Fruits and vegetables, according to medieval Islamic mystic thought, have the effect of "lowering" the soul or "raising" it and removing negative feelings. Pomegranates are considered to do the latter, purging the system of rage, envy and hatred. Whatever explanation modern medicine might have for this, choosing one's food with care for the effect it has on body and soul is far from an innovation.

The only member of the family *Punicaceae*, the pomegranate (*Punica granatum*) grows wild in its presumed original habitat in Asia, in forests in northern Persia, to the south of the Caspian Sea and in Azerbaijan and the Northern Caucasus.

It is a small tree with vermilion flowers and round coral-red fruit which ripens late in the autumn. Hiding inside the leathery skin of the fruit is a treasure of translucent ruby grains from which garnet, the precious stone, takes its name. The fruit is recorded early in





THE ROMANS CONSUMED POMEGRANATES IN GREAT
QUANTITIES, MADE WINE FROM THE FERMENTED
JUICE AND PRESERVED THE FRUIT, DIPPED
IN SEAWATER AND DRIED IN THE SUN, FOR WINTER

the history of the Mediterranean, where it was widely cultivated and appreciated for its medicinal and magical properties. It figured in the religious rites of the Phoenicians, and the goddess Aphrodite is supposed to have planted the pomegranate tree in her birthplace, Cyprus. This may indicate that the plant was not indigenous to the Mediterranean. In *The Odyssey* Homer mentions pomegranate trees growing in the gardens of Phaeacia (modern Foça on Turkey's Aegean coast) and in the hills of Phrygia in western Anatolia. The pomegranate was cultivated as a sacred fruit in Egypt, where thirst-quenching sherbets were made with it, and pomegranates appear in tomb murals of 1547 BC. The oldest dried pomegranate fruit, in the Egyptian Museum in Berlin, was found among the offerings in a tomb dating from the reign of Ramses IV (1167-1148 BC). The pomegranate is mentioned in the Old Testament; the Israelites had probably learned to appreciate it in Egyptian gardens. Some 200 gilded pomegranates are said to have adorned each of the capitals on the columns of the Temple of Solomon.

The fruit has many grains, each bearing a seed and what looks like a coronet on top – the calyx. It was a symbol of unity and concord and was therefore a popular royal or family emblem. Old European families often have pomegranates in their heraldic arms. In Hellenistic coins, pomegranates appear next to the heads of deities. Judging by the fruit's Phrygian and Carian name, *side*, many cities in antiquity were named after it. Likewise in Palestine and Jordan, cities were often given the name *rim-môn*, the Semitic word for pomegranate.

The Romans called it *malum punicum*, apple of Carthage, or *malum granata*, apple with grains. Its composition symbol-

ised unity, rather like the stars in the American flag, and Romans wore wreaths of pomegranate branches. But there was also a Latin proverb with political connotations: "*Omni malo punico inest granum putre*" – "In every pomegranate is a rotten pip."

The citizens of Rome consumed pomegranates in great quantities, made wine from the fermented juice and preserved the fruit, dipped in seawater and dried in the sun, for winter. Nero, who feasted from sunset to dawn, had his favourite digestif made from pomegranates and quinces. Hippocrates, in the fifth century BC, recommended the juice against fever. The dried skin and vermilion flowers were later used as powerful astringents. The bark and root were sold in powder form as a remedy against tapeworms by European pharmacists at the beginning of this century.

The pomegranate also had a commercial importance in ancient times. Quite apart from the fruit's culinary, medicinal and semi-mystic properties, its bitter leathery skin and the bark of the tree contain dyeing elements and tannin, which are used to dye cotton and wool reddish brown and lemon yellow and to tan the finest maroquin and saffian leathers. Be warned: stains on clothes are therefore persistent.

Nowadays only one type of pomegranate is available in supermarkets, but there are also the "sour pomegranates" often referred to in old recipes. Because of their high citric acid content, these cannot be eaten raw but were used to flavour dishes long before lemons were introduced to the Mediterranean. Sour pomegranate juice is still made today in Anatolia. Called *nar ekşisi*, it is used as a salad dressing and seasoning and to make pomegranate sherbet, or *nar şerbeti*, a popular lemonade-like drink.

In the thirteenth century ten

species of pomegranate are known by the Arabs to have been grown in the south of Spain alone. In the Ottoman Empire there were not only sweet and sour varieties, but also white pomegranates with white skins and sweet pink grains, and "black" pomegranates from Baghdad, with a deep purple skin and large, slightly sour grains. Pomegranates from the island of Chios (Sakız Adası) were beautifully shaped and admired for their tiny pips. Another kind called *cherabani*, with very acidic little grains, made excellent wine. The *Selimi* pomegranate, probably named after the Ottoman conqueror of Baghdad, weighed a kilo, had deep red juicy grains with tiny pips, and was much appreciated at the time. The one that sounds most extraordinary is the *çekirdeksiz* variety, which apparently, like sultana grapes, had no pips.

In the seventeenth century Evliya Çelebi, the Ottoman traveller, records eighteen different sweet and juicy varieties of pomegranate in Karabağ in Azerbaijan alone. He also mentions that Tabriz in northern Iran was virtually flowing with wines made from the fruits and the blossom. The largest pomegranates in Anatolia came from Maraş in the south-east, and were sent all over the Ottoman Empire as valued gifts. The rugged south-east has long been famous for its pomegranates, judging by the magnificent frieze that decorates the medieval Armenian church of Aktamar on Lake Van.

Evliya Çelebi also describes how he chanced on the dessert chefs from the palace in Istanbul on the Aegean island of Kos (İstanköy). They were ordering 200 barrels of lemon and pomegranate juice to take back to the palace kitchens, where not only desserts and sherbets but also digestifs and medicines were made.

The pharmacist and doctor Hızır Hacı Pasha, who died in

the town of Birgi near Izmir in 1417, recommends pomegranates against anxiety and distress in his practical handbook of remedies, written "for times when there is not a good doctor around". A mixture of sour and sweet grains should be crushed with their pips in a mortar and mixed with sugar, he says. Taken before meals this preparation is supposed to cleanse the body of unhappiness. Another remedy in the same manuscript is sour pomegranate juice, boiled until it reduces by half, mixed with honey and mint and diluted with water. This sherbet should help to cheer up a heavy soul.

All the recipes here call for fresh pomegranate juice. Halve the fruits with a stainless steel knife and squeeze the juice using a lemon squeezer. Avoid metal utensils unless they are stainless steel or silver as they discolour the juice of the fruit. Where whole grains of pomegranate are called for, be certain to discard the bitter white membrane.

NARLI ÇORBA POMEGRANATE SOUP

4 cups chicken stock
1 cup pomegranate juice
Salt and pepper
Handful pomegranate grains
Fresh parsley or mint leaves
to garnish

This broth from Azerbaijan is a fresh, light and wholesome starter. If the pomegranates are very sweet, mix the juice with lemon juice.

1. Bring the stock to the boil, then reduce the heat.
2. Stir in the pomegranate juice and add salt and pepper. Bring back to the boil, then remove from the heat. Boil briefly so as to preserve the vitamins in the pomegranate.
3. Serve hot, garnished with pomegranate grains and fresh mint or parsley leaves.

SORBETS ARE ALWAYS WONDERFUL
TO LOOK AT, BUT POMEGRANATE
SORBET SERVED IN A CRYSTAL OR SILVER
BOWL IS PERFECTION

KISIR
PARSLEY AND BULGUR
SALAD

*1 cup fine bulgur
(cracked wheat)*
*1 cup tomato juice or fresh
tomato purée*
4 spring onions
*A large bunch of fresh
flat-leaved parsley*
A few fresh mint leaves
1/2 cup pomegranate juice
1 tablespoon olive oil
Lettuce leaves to garnish

This delicious *meze* is a speciality of Antakya in southern Anatolia, though different versions are prepared all around the eastern Mediterranean. (Lebanese *Tabbouleh* has much less bulgur.) Lemon juice can be used instead, but pomegranate juice gives a special piquancy. For fresh tomato juice, peel three ripe tomatoes and work them through a food mill or purée coarsely in a processor.

1. Wash and drain the bulgur. Soak in a bowl with the tomato juice/purée for a few hours until the bulgur is tender.
2. Wash and pat dry the spring onions, parsley and mint and chop very finely. Add to the soaked bulgur.
3. Stir in the pomegranate juice and olive oil and season with salt, mixing with a wooden spoon until everything is well amalgamated.
4. Wash and dry the lettuce leaves and arrange on a serving dish. Spoon the *kisir* into the centre of each leaf.

BILDIRCIN KEBABI
GRILLED QUAILS

4 quails (giblets removed)
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 cup pomegranate juice
1/2 teaspoon chilli sauce
Sea salt
*1 teaspoon freshly ground
white pepper*
2 tablespoons thick yoghurt
Skewers

This recipe is an unrivalled way of drawing out the flavour of quail. The birds are traditionally boned and spatchcocked (split, flattened and skewered). If you do not have much time, just cut off the ends of the wings with a pair of poultry shears or a sharp knife and remove the innards.

1. Singe, bone and flatten the birds. Thread one skewer through the wings and one through the legs of each bird.
2. Whisk together the olive oil, pomegranate juice, chilli sauce and pepper.
3. Put the quails in a deep dish and pour over the marinade, coating the birds thoroughly. Cover and leave for a couple of hours, turning occasionally.
4. Preheat the grill or barbecue.
5. Remove the birds from the marinade. Whisk the yoghurt into the marinade to thicken it to a paste and add salt. Brush the birds thoroughly with this paste, which will form a crust.
6. Grill the birds for five to six minutes until crisp on both sides but juicy in the centre.
7. Remove the skewers and serve very hot with fresh bread and a green salad.

ACEM YAHNISI
BRAISED CHICKEN WITH
WALNUTS

*1 medium chicken cut
into pieces*
2 tablespoons butter
2 medium onions
Juice of 1/2 lemon
1 cup pomegranate juice
Salt, cinnamon, black pepper
2 cups coarsely crushed walnuts
*Fresh mint and a handful of
pomegranate grains to garnish*

An attractive and exotic dish from Persia, also known as *fesinjan*, which, as the name suggests, would originally have been prepared with pheasant. Indeed any game can be used, including duck. Small birds are usually left whole. The humble

chicken may not have the richness of game, but it is still delicious – and much quicker to cook. The pomegranate juice heightens the flavour of the bird. Because the ingredients are so distinctive, plain pilav rice is the best accompaniment.

1. Halve two pomegranates. Detach the grains from one half and set aside for decoration. Squeeze the juice from the other three pomegranate halves and the lemon.
2. Heat the butter in a fireproof casserole, then fry the chopped onions lightly, add the chicken joints and brown them on each side until just coloured.
3. Pour in the pomegranate and lemon juice. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat. Season with salt, freshly ground pepper and cinnamon (freshly grated). Simmer covered until tender. If the juice is absorbed before the chicken has cooked, add a little hot water.
4. While the chicken is cooking, preheat the oven.
5. Sprinkle the chicken with the walnuts and transfer to a hot oven uncovered for 10 minutes.
6. Serve garnished with mint leaves and pomegranate grains.

NARLI DONDURMA
POMEGRANATE SORBET

4 large ripe pomegranates
Juice of 1 lemon
1 tablespoon kirsch
1 cup drinking water
4 generous tablespoons sugar
Handful pomegranate grains
*Lemon geranium or lemon
balm leaves*

Sorbets are always wonderful to look at, but pomegranate sorbet, served in silver or crystal bowls to reflect light onto the brilliant fleeting-rose pink, is perfection.

1. Make a light syrup by boiling water and sugar until the sugar has dissolved. Set aside and leave to cool.

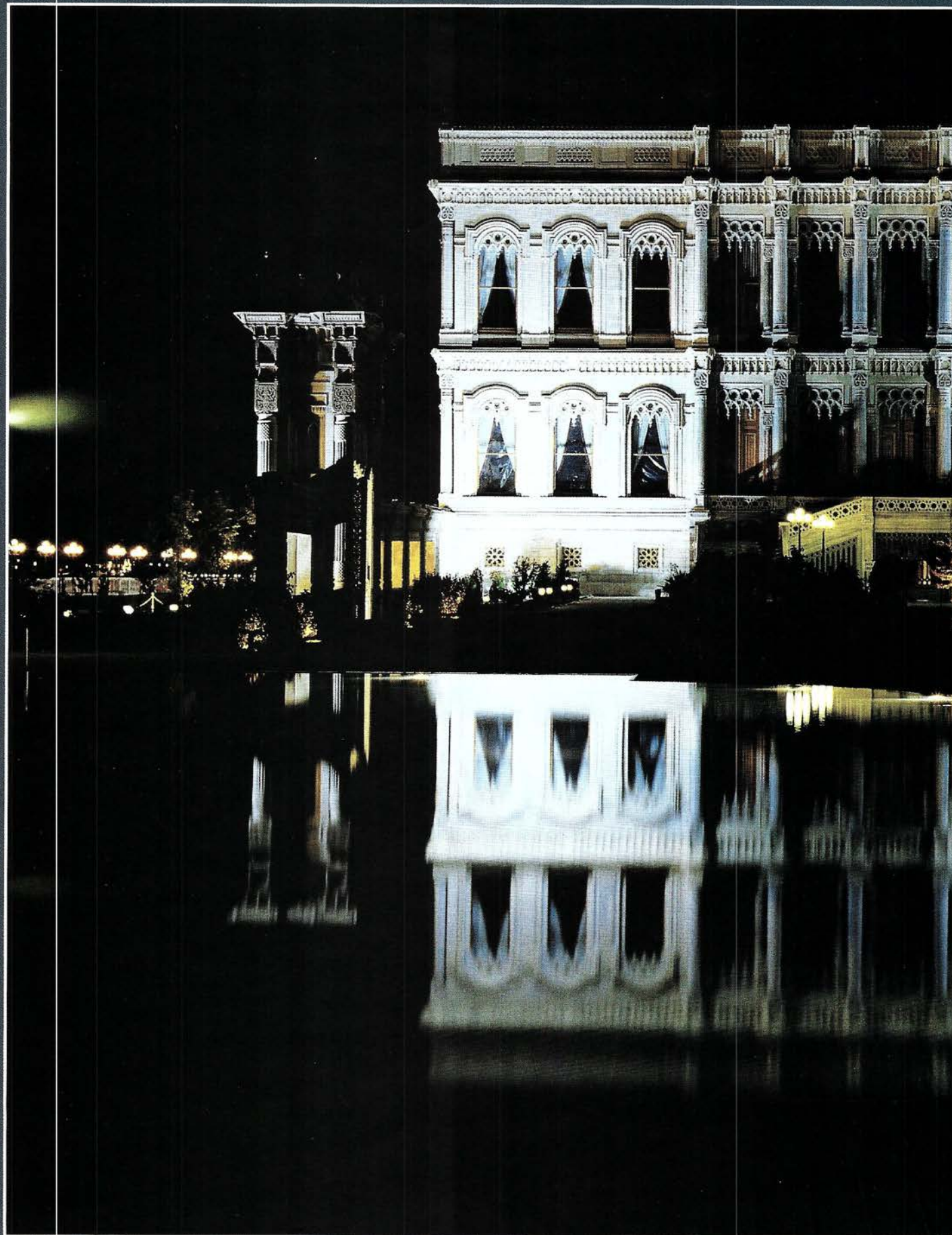
2. Wash and pat dry the pomegranates with a cloth or paper towel. Halve with a stainless steel knife.
3. Select a handful of the best ruby-coloured grains of the pomegranate and set aside.
4. Squeeze the juice from the pomegranates and lemon. Mix and strain through a plastic sieve or cheesecloth into a glass or porcelain bowl.
5. Stir in the syrup and kirsch. Mix with a wooden spoon and taste for sweetness. Add more sugar if needed.
6. Freeze in an electric sorbetière. If this is not available place in the freezer, whisking from time to time for a smooth consistency.
7. To serve, scoop the sorbet into chilled bowls and decorate with pomegranate grains and delicately scented lemon geranium or lemon balm leaves.

NAR ŞURUBU
POMEGRANATE SYRUP

*4 cups freshly strained
pomegranate juice*
(see Pomegranate Sorbet)
3 cups caster sugar

This is similar to the French *grenadine* syrup. When diluted with water and a few drops of lemon juice to bring out the flavour and colour, it makes an excellent sherbet. Adding pomegranate grains to this sherbet makes *nar hoşabı*, a refreshing compôte once served between courses at banquets. Pomegranate syrup also makes a good sauce for vanilla ice cream and puddings.

1. Bring the pomegranate juice and sugar to the boil in a small fireproof dish, stirring with a wooden spoon until the sugar dissolves completely and the syrup reduces a little.
2. Add a couple of drops of freshly squeezed lemon. Bring back to the boil.
3. When cooler, transfer to a sterilised jar or bottle and keep in the fridge until needed. ♦





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HIDDEN TREASURES OF THE SERAGLIO

DYALA SALAM'S LONDON SHOP, REPLETE WITH RICHES FROM THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN, HAS THE HEADY ATMOSPHERE OF A SULTAN'S RETREAT. REPORT BY PATRICIA JELLCOE.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN BENNETT

Leave London's grey skies and enter Dyala Salam's shop, welcomed by a gilded star and crescent, and you find yourself magically transported into a tiny jewelled domain – the hidden world of the Seraglio.

Overhead, a large eight-pointed Islamic star is hung with pierced metal lamps, whose patterned light glints around you as you sip the Turkish coffee offered and recline on the ruby velvet and gilt of a Louis XVI sofa.

An hour of warm hospitality is easily shared with the beautiful auburn-haired Dyala. Lebanese with a Turkish grandmother, she spent her childhood with her collector grandfather in Istanbul, Aleppo, Beirut and Cairo, and studied art in Chelsea.

For the interior of her shop, Alex Davidson (theatre designer and decorator, and restorer of Brighton Pavilion's exotic lacquered music room) has recreated the Sultan's favourite small "Fruit Salon", hidden high above the myriad harem chambers of the Topkapı Palace. Under a stencilled frieze of vases, flowers and fruit in pale pink and green, he has painted four layers of blue, turquoise and green on a foundation of gold, giving the walls a feeling of the fading, shredding beauty of once-exquisite silk.

As in the Sultan's tiny salon, walls melt into discreet cupboards, whose

series of small arched alcoves are filled with the deep reds, pearly whites, turquoise and Islamic green of glass vases, bowls, goblets and dishes – including nineteenth-century Bohemian glass specially made and gilded for the opulent Turkish court and rich merchants; eighteenth-century Beykoz from the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus (inspired by the earlier Bohemian glass, a milkier material with a more individual and spontaneous decoration); and nineteenth-century French opaline made for the Turkish market, its opaqueness rosy-hued against the light.

On the walls all around hang colourful textiles, decorative carved and gilded woods, and gleaming ceramic tiles. One wall is dominated by a Turkish rococo carved and gilded wooden wall piece with decorative hooks running down each side, ideal for hanging fezzes; on another wall hangs a pair of gilt-embroidered scarlet velvet panels. In a corner are two matching French green and brass-inlaid wooden silhouette urns, from the eighteenth century.

Everywhere – as though flung off after midnight revelry – is an iridescent extravaganza of robes, cushions and folds of velvet, silk and gauze. From Bokhara there is a tie-dyed *khalat*, a man's robe, in rose, green and purple, and a typical hanging embroidered with crimson poppies; and an Uzbek tie-dyed *ikat* of rose and pink silk lies on a

mother-of-pearl Damascus chest beside a tiny English "Turquerie" table.

On a lime-green satin Turkish sofa are cushions of deep wine-red velvet with embroidery of a floral rococo design executed in gilt *sarma* work, a technique originating from Morocco and typical of Turkish nineteenth-century court dress. The metal was backed with cardboard before being sewn delicately on to the velvet. There are *suzani* cushions too, finely embroidered in striking designs – such as flowering bouquets in a most unusual golden yellow.

Among the wealth of Eastern paraphernalia is the odd Western artefact. On one wall, for example, supporting a yellow Çanakkale jug full of peacock feathers, is a tall wooden Italian wall bracket with subtle painted decoration. There is also the odd piece of kitsch to add flavour, such as a majolica plate adorned with conspicuously three-dimensional roses.

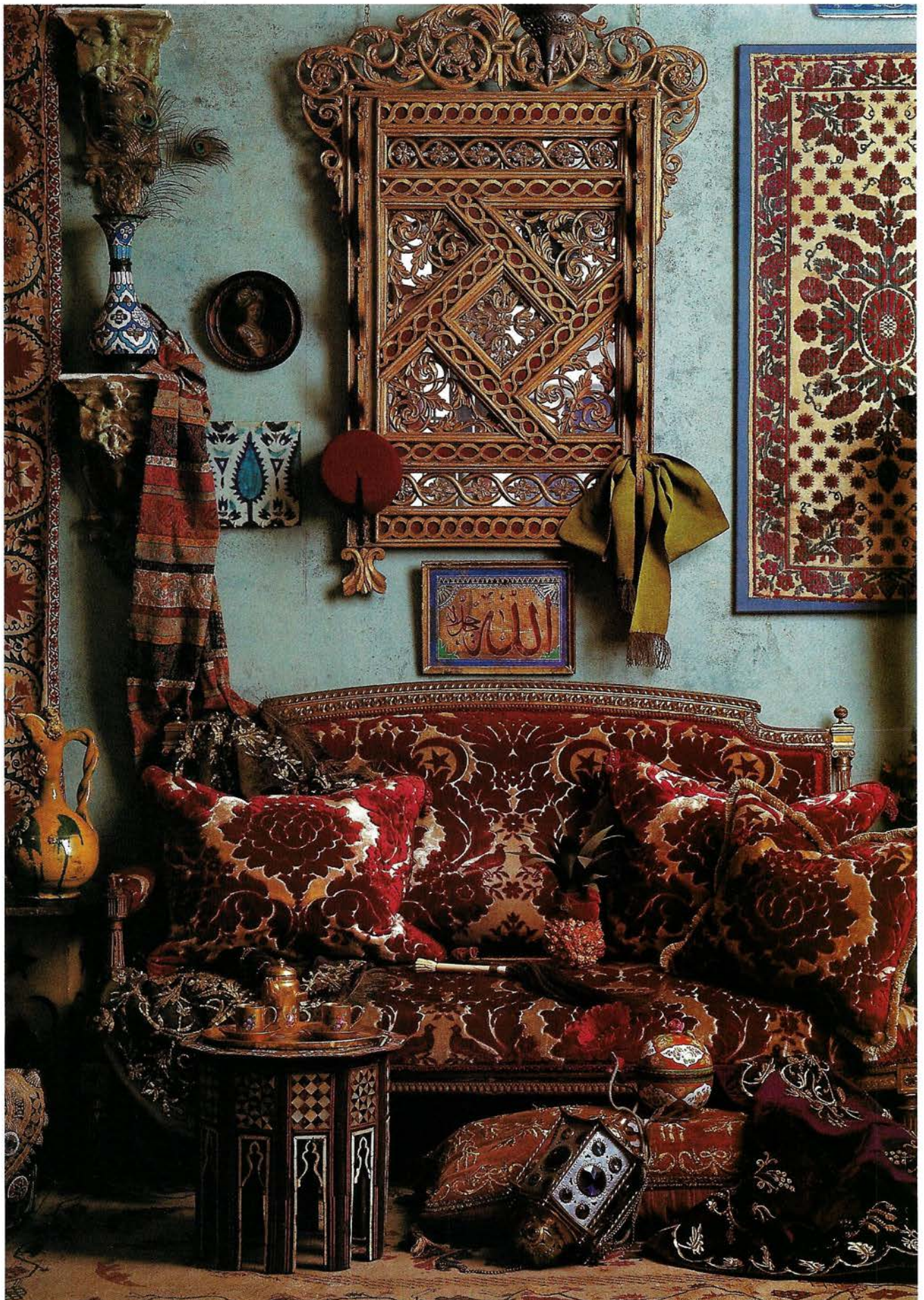
Dyala Salam's tiny shop has given London a vision of rare and precious beauty from a time when France and the Levant interchanged cultures in mutual fascination. And she will sell you silk, glass, tiles or porcelain in all manner of colours and designs, to help you to dream away the hours in your own favourite retreat. ♦

Dyala Salam, 174A Kensington Church Street, London W8 4DP. Tel 071 229 4045

RIGHT: DYALA SALAM'S KENSINGTON ANTIQUE SHOP IS A LITTLE BOX OF TREASURES.

DOMINATING THE FAR WALL IS A CARVED WOODEN WALL PIECE FROM 19TH-CENTURY TURKEY. TO THE LEFT OF THIS IS A SMALL ITALIAN PORTRAIT OF A SULTAN; TO THE RIGHT IS A MOUNTED RUG, KNOWN AS A ÇATMA. THE LOUIS XVI GILDED SOFA IS UPHOLSTERED IN 19TH-CENTURY CUT VELVET WITH A CRESCENT-AND-STAR PATTERN. ON A SMALL TABLE IN FRONT OF THIS IS A FRENCH LIMOGES COFFEE SET MADE FOR THE TURKISH MARKET. THE RUG IS TURKISH AND DATES FROM THE 18TH CENTURY

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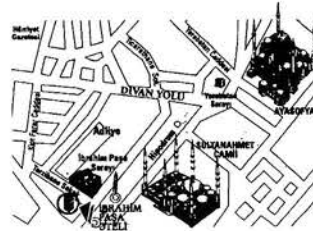
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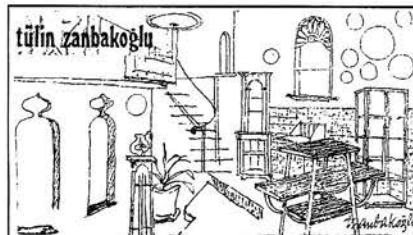
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